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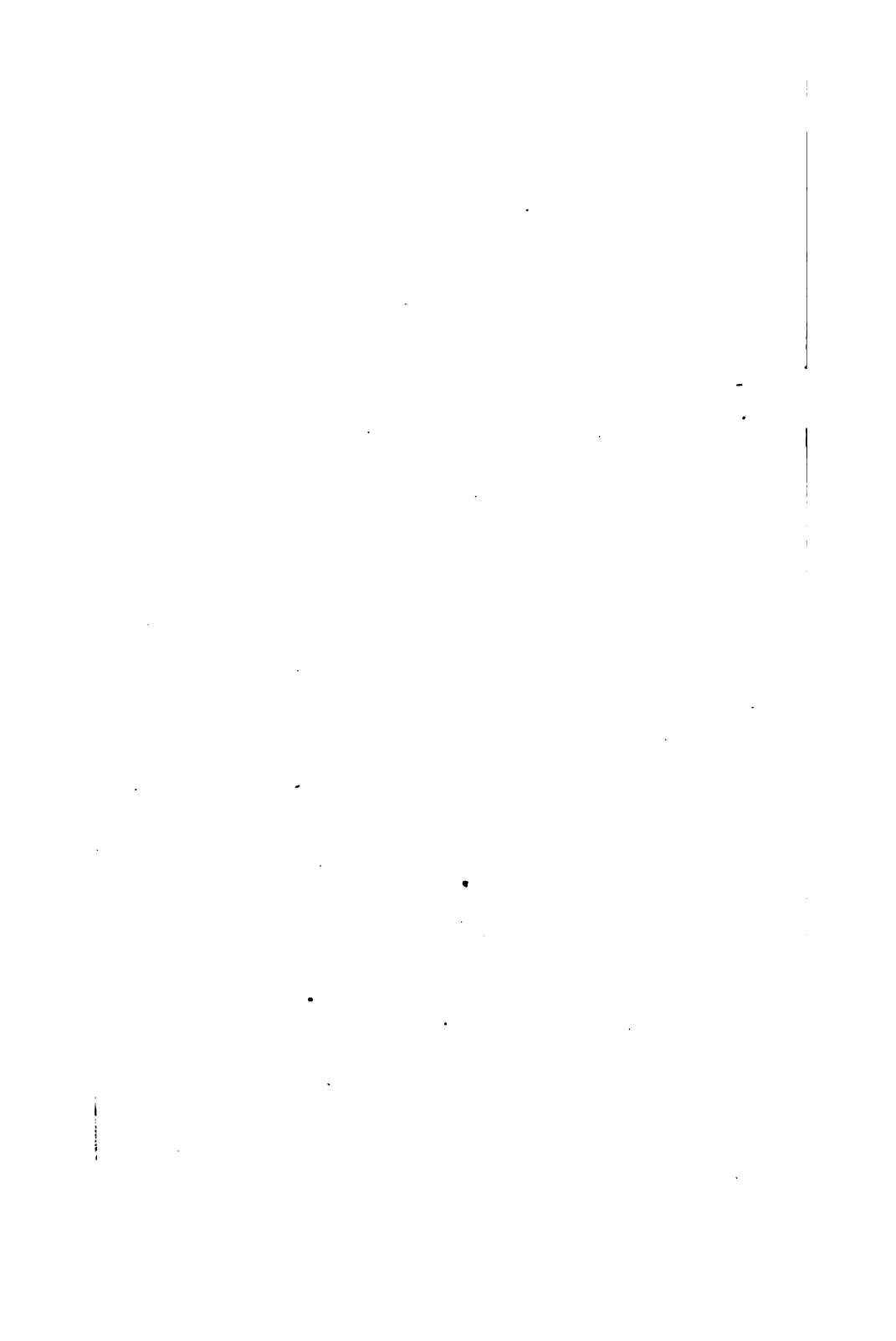
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THE PROFESSOR

CHAPTER I.

THE BETROTHAL BALL.

COMMERCIAL COUNSELLOR WIDEN'S house was brilliantly illuminated, the sounds of music and dancing were heard from the saloons above, and the spectators who had collected on the lofty stair-head of the hotel opposite, could plainly distinguish the light figures as they moved through the mazes of the Française.

Gentlemen decorated with gold chains, and elegantly dressed dames in light flowing robes of black gauze, with blooming cheeks and roses in their hair flitted breathlessly through the apartments, waving their embroidered handkerchiefs.

“ Well,” said one gossiping old matron among the occupants of the stair-head, “ well I should like to know why the Counsellor is giving a ball now just before Christmas ; these grand folks are eternally amusing themselves ; could’nt he have as well waited for the holidays.”

“ Oh, you never understand anything,” replied her neighbour. “ I suppose you have not heard then that the Counsellor is celebrating this evening his daughter’s betrothal with Captain Ling—that handsome young gentleman there who is speaking to the young lady in blue crape ; that is his cousin, Miss Hilda Borgensköld, whom people do say he is most dreadfully in love with, but when her father,

the silly noodle, allowed himself to be wheedled into becoming security for that fool of a fellow Bocker, the old feud between Lieutenant Borgensköld and his half brother, the wealthy Professor Ling, broke out afresh, and there was an end of the Captain's love. The young lady was as poor as himself, and there was little to be got by sailing against the wind, for he was totally dependent upon the old Professor; however, he did not take it very much to heart, for the very same day he paid his addresses to the rich merchant's daughter, and acceptance and betrothal followed close upon each others heels. Aye, aye, strange things come to pass in this world. Oh, now do look at Miss Hilda, how proud and beautiful she still appears, though sorrow is at her heart, for it can't be such a very pleasant thing to see oneself slighted because one has nothing besides one's pretty face and an active pair of hands. Fie, fie, upon the young men now-a-days. Money, money—has she money, that

is always the first question when they think of marriage; but ah, now do look, mother Brita, only see how sadly he looks at her, he must be a false deceiver, that Captain, that I am sure of; and now see how he slips away to the other end of the room, cozening the bride with a face smiling like a spring morning. She is a perfect angel, that she is, Miss Rosa, I wish you could see her—just try, neighbour, and get up here into a better place.”

While this manoeuvre was being effected there arose a bustle in the street, the crowds separated and made way for an old-fashioned carriage, which rolled slowly up, and stopped before the Commercial Counsellor's door. A servant quickly descended from the box, opened the carriage door, and proceeded respectfully to aid an old gentleman, who was inside, to alight. Both master and man resembled a couple of well preserved examples of a time long gone by, at least to judge from their exterior, which was not only old-

fashioned but most singular. Leaning upon the arm of his old domestic the gentleman ascended the steps of the house, and, at the first glimpse of his person, a smart soubrette, who had been standing sentinel at a window, flew up stairs as fast as her legs could carry her, and the result was soon evident from the late and honoured guest being received in the corridor, by the young Captain and his charming bride, the beautiful Rosa Widen.

“You are most truly welcome, dear Mr. Professor,” said the young girl, in a friendly and musical voice, “it makes us so very happy that Professor Ling, who so rarely leaves home, is so kind as to honor us with his company this evening.”

“Yes, indeed, my dear uncle,” added the Captain, in a polite and easy tone, as he offered the old gentleman his arm to conduct him into a side room. “Upon my word I look upon it as the very highest compliment

in the world, that my dear uncle does me the honour to attend my betrothal ball."

"Hem, hem," said the Professor, a sardonic smile playing upon his thin lips. "I must confess, Ferdinand, it does not please me very much to hear you speak thus; at least until this morning, there was something upon which you would have set a higher value."

The Captain turned scarlet, and a bright flash beamed in his eyes, but he kept silence and turned aside as Rosa regarded him with a certain expression of surprise.

"Well, well, let us say no more about that," continued his uncle in a gentler tone, as he kissed the bride upon the forehead, and extended his hand to his nephew. "I congratulate ye both with all my heart, or rather I wish you both every happiness," he looked as if he would have added something more, but abruptly stopped and remained silent, for at that instant the Commercial Counsellor

entered. He was a tall, broad-shouldered man, with an air of excessive self-complacency, and had any one taken the pains to scrutinize every individual feature of his face, and to observe for a moment his proud, perhaps rather arrogant bearing, he would have arrived at the same conclusion as at the first glance; his whole appearance stamped him as a man whose complacent feelings were grounded upon the conviction that his name was that of a demigod upon change, that his books were (believed at least to be) in the most flourishing condition, and that his guarantee was held as good as money in all the private banks. He entered the room.

"Your most obedient servant, welcome, most welcome, my good brother; upon my honour a regular surprise, for at this hour I hardly expected to see any more of my missing guests, and least of all our good Professor Ling."

"Gives me great pleasure,." rejoined the

Professor, and again appeared the old sarcastic smile, which seemed to be natural to him. "Gives me great pleasure to find that Mr. Widen is so happy to see me : I could not help coming to give the young people my blessing."

"Aye, aye, young people who think of matrimony now-a-days have good need of a rich and abundant blessing," observed Mr. Widen with an important mien, which rapidly passed into a facetious grin, as he whispered in the Professor's ear. "A man who has a large family about him, like myself, cannot act quite so independently in such cases, as an elderly, childless and heartily beloved uncle."

"Aha, your most obedient," said the Professor, with a low bow. "If you only sent me such a pressing invitation to be present at the young people's betrothal in order to sound me in this respect—why then— * *"

"Now my very good Professor, my good brother, for all the world do not misunderstand a little joke ! naturally, this is not the place to

talk of such things," and so saying, the host took his guest's arm, and led him into the hall, where the Counsellor's lady received their honoured friend with her most gracious smile, courteously obliging him to sit down in the vacant place, upon her own peculiar sofa.

Meanwhile the betrothed pair remained behind, some few seconds in the cabinet, *tête-à-tête*. The captain led his bride to the window, where he appeared to converse with her in a low tone of heart-felt cordiality, and while they are thus engaged, let us steal a moment to sketch their persons. Captain Ferdinand Ling was middle-sized, powerfully and well built, and with a manner of carrying himself, which lent his person more dignity than nature had bestowed upon it; his face could not be exactly denominated handsome, but there was something fresh and pleasant in its expression, which supplied the place of more brilliant attributes. A smile habitually played upon his well-formed lips, but if one

might judge from the dark, almost sinister expression, which at times gleamed in his flashing black eyes, the smile was on the lips alone, whilst the soul within was perhaps struggling with impetuous passions. At such moments he could not sustain the firm, steady glance of another, and his drooping eyelids concealed the play of the feelings beneath. As to the rest, Captain Ling was a man, who passed for a pattern of good breeding in the most select circles of the town—a man of elegance and refinement, and exactly the kind of person who is looked upon as a welcome acquisition to society.

His bride, Rosa Widen, was a tall, graceful, blonde of a most symmetrical figure, and universally celebrated for her beauty, which in reality did approach very near to the original perfection of womanly loveliness—however, she herself either was, or appeared to be unconscious of this, and it was the inexpressible simplicity, the charming unaffected grace of

her quiet, amiable character, which caused her to be universally sought and beloved.

“I do not need,” said she gently, and laying her hand upon her bridegroom’s lips, as with more than his usual eloquence, he enlarged upon the extent of his affection, and the greatness of his happiness. “I do not need these assurances, what purpose do they serve? I know that you are sincerely well affected towards me, and why should I renew the sacred promise which I gave you some days ago in my mother’s presence? I have sufficient respect and esteem for you, to place my future peace and happiness in your hands with perfect tranquillity and satisfaction, and if I am not quite capable of sharing the ardour of your feelings, which rather resemble the desolating impetuosity of a tempest, than the mild inspiration of calm and quiet affection, ascribe it to my temperament, and not to my heart, and rest assured of my cordial good-will.”

The Captain’s cheeks flushed higher and

higher, as he twisted his well trained moustache most industriously, while the compression of his upper lip, shewed him to be under the influence of violent, and not exactly agreeable emotions.

"My good, beloved Rosa," he said with forced composure, "pray forgive me, if my feelings do not exactly express themselves as you would wish; and be assured, that it shall be my most earnest endeavour, through the utmost circumspection, to approach the same point where you have taken your stand, and which you have been pleased to surround by a barrier of ice, in order to give your lover the opportunity of cooling himself, in case his heart should be a little too fervent."

Surprised, and with a glance, which plainly evinced her displeasure, Rosa regarded the Captain's impetuous out-break; his words hurt her, to judge by the crimson which mantled in her cheeks, and her hand almost imperceptibly trembled as he took it, and ap-

peared to wish to apologize for the impropriety of his last expressions—she however said nothing, and he led her back into the hall, amongst the gay and cheerful throng.

“Shall we waltz?” he asked, in a low and friendly tone, pointing to the animated scene; “dear good Rosa,” he implored caressingly, “do not, I beseech you, be angry with me.”

“Oh no Ferdinand, surely not that, but”—

“No buts,” replied the Captain, gaily drawing her into the stream of dancers.

In a corner of the saloon, stood silent and alone, leaning against a little marble table, a pale and gentlemanly young man, of a tall, but slender figure; his features were noble and beautiful; his high, white forehead, was expressive of earnest and thoughtful composure; but in his dark blue eyes, flamed up at times a consuming glow, when they happened to fall upon some distant object in the saloon; at other times his look was gentle, good, and open as the day. Every time that this excitement

flashed up, he passed his hand over his eyes, and thoughtfully shook aside the rich brown locks, which curled about his handsome head. The young man's dress was black, and by its worn appearance, and the whiteness of the seams, shewed that it belonged to one of those poor young men of learning, who slowly carve out their path into the sanctuary of literature, through the trying school, and the fore courts of poverty. It was Frank Mannerstedt, a young candidate in philosophy; as teacher in music and languages in the rich banker's house, he had been honoured with an invitation to the festival of the day. Poor Mannerstedt's exertions were directed to an aim, the attainment of which, though still far off in the vista of futurity, could not, with his industry and perseverance, remain very long unachieved—and this was the laurel wreath, and beyond this, either the lucrative office of rector of some important school, or who knows—perhaps some quiet parsonage, under the shade of lofty lime

trees—a little dreaming must be permitted to all men; without this happy faculty, without one kindly hope for the future, all our present exertions would be continually paralyzed.

At the very moment when one of these blinding beams which we have referred to appeared to have dazzled poor Mannerstedt's eyes, and caused him to shade them with his hand, the Counsellor himself chanced to pass him; he stopped, clapped him on the shoulder, and with a patronizing air and a gracious smile, said—

“Well, my good Candidate, how are you; won't you dance, these sort of amusements do not come every day, your way. Up man, and shake off a little of the book dust.”

Mannerstedt excused himself on the plea of having, for the past year, declined dancing. The real reason, however, was the fear of exposing his scanty and ill got up toilette to the criticism of the lookers on, and thus becoming an object of their unfeeling derision, for no

doubt they would feel an irresistible smile of scorn curl their lips on seeing him in his short trowsers and tight old dress coat; however, there was nothing to be said in opposition to the Counsellor's wishes, especially by a man who was receiving his three dollars banco, every Saturday, and was asked to dinner every Sunday.

"You must dance, my friend," continued the rich merchant, in his gentlest tone, but at the same time with an emphasis which shewed that he would listen to no excuses; perceiving, however, that Mannerstedt had the unheard of audacity to urge his objections anew, with a courteous bow, and a polite movement of dissent, the great man quickly called to his daughter who was just concluding her waltz with the Captain. She approached her father with a smiling face, and he immediately asked her—

"For which tour are you disengaged?"

Rosa reflected for an instant.

"The fifth waltz, dear papa."

"Good," said her father, "Mr. Mannerstedt will engage you for it."

And the haughty man passed on, without vouchsafing to notice, by a single glance, the young man's flushing cheeks and downcast eyes. Rosa remained standing before him, expecting him to confirm her father's last words, but the rush of his contending feelings was so confusing, that he could not utter a word. "Insulted Pride," that most tender chord in the heart of a poor and dependent youth, at the uncourteous interference of the Counsellor, the apprehension of offending one who had, to a certain extent, been his patron, the acute feelings of shame, when he thought of the looks with which the assembled guests would regard him, and lastly, the most powerful sensation of all, and which outweighed all the rest—the joy, the rapture of dancing with Rosa, the mere contemplation of whom had hitherto reconciled him to the many bitter and

painful hours which he had been compelled to experience in the Counsellor's house; the kind and delicately feeling girl, had a pretty correct conception of the real state of the case. She knew her father well, and saw at once that he had been the cause of placing Mannerstedt in this embarrassing position, and in the sweetest tones she said—

“Papa would be so pleased to-day to see every body cheerful, and therefore does not perhaps altogether sufficiently regard the taste and inclinations of his guests; but it is all the result of his kind anxiety for their amusement, and if it is not quite contrary to Mr. Mannerstedt's inclinations to dance, we should wish to afford him the pleasure of doing so.”

The young man gave her a glance, which should have spoken thankfulness alone, but which had the effect of driving the warm blood to Rosa's cheeks; he quickly cast down his eyes, and said, in a tolerably calm voice—

“If Miss Widen will honor me by the hap-

piness of a waltz, all my scruples must at once give way. I shall have the honour to claim my privilege at the proper time."

He bowed deeply—Rosa smiled and went to the other side of the room—Mannerstedt resumed his former position, and his searching glance soon discovered that Rosa had scarcely seated herself ere she was surrounded by a whole crowd of butterflies, who vied with each other for her attention ; while this goes on, we as unprejudiced observers of this gay picture may be allowed to watch how Captain Ling, after many and various innocent little movements here, there, and every where, contrived, at last, as if by chance, to hit upon the corner where Hilda Borgensköld was seated.

Somebody who was sitting near her, had, without being aware of his own magnanimity, in so doing, got up from his chair, which was immediately occupied by Ferdinand.

The young, somewhat pale, but yet attractive girl, seemed embarrassed, and, as if she

would have avoided the toils of her enemy, if she could, she looked towards the opposite side of the room, to see if she could not discover some valid pretence for crossing, but every chair was full, and a number of gentlemen had posted themselves about the door, and she was therefore compelled to submit to her fate, and remain where she was, though this was the worst of all.

“Dear, dear Hilda,” said Captain Ling, in a whisper, “why, why did you deny me the interview I requested? and why, if even you would not grant me this favor, did you return my letter unopened. Oh, Hilda, Hilda, you were cruel, or you might have spared us all much pain. This very morning I spoke with my uncle, but alas, what could I say to him when I felt that I had no hope.”

“Ferdinand,” said Miss Borgensköld, coldly interrupting her cousin. “You shew but little delicacy in thus resuming such a worn out

subject at a party like this. It really is not worth wasting more words upon the matter, and therefore be so kind as to leave me."

"Heavens, how bitter you are, Hilda," said Ferdinand, with a sigh, his cheeks glowing and his eyes flashing. "Do you believe then that I have kept the roses only for myself, and have left the thorns to you? Oh, no; believe me, they have struck into my heart, and rent it with deep and painful wounds, but I will not longer intrude upon you—only, Hilda—do not refuse me the next waltz, it would only excite remark and surprise in the company, if such near relatives should not dance even one miserable *francaise* together."

"Not one waltz," replied Hilda, resolutely.

"No, I can well believe you will not vouchsafe me the pleasure," replied the Captain, gloomily, "but you cannot surely refuse me one quadrille."

"No," she rejoined indifferently, "even that is quite unnecessary." Ling rose, bowed,

without speaking, and leaving her, entered one of the play-rooms.

Time flew quickly for the lively dancers, and at last came the appointed waltz which Mannerstedt was to dance with Rosa. He drew near, his heart beating high with contending emotion. It was worth while to see how all the elegants of the day recoiled in astonishment, and made way as Rosa stood up with the young candidate, who they had never even in their dreams imagined could venture upon becoming their rival. He returned their mock politeness with a proud glance, and, though his hand trembled a little as he lightly placed it upon Rosa's waist, for his arm scarcely came near enough to touch the outer fold of her crape dress ; yet his free and graceful bearing and the manner in which he led his partner, gave an expression to his dancing which caused his shyness to be observed by no one, save by her, the only one who could ever make him tremble.

During a pause, the young man cast a

glance of almost defiance around the saloon, to see if any lip presumed to curl into a contemptuous smile. How that might be; was not, however, quite determined, for Mannerstedt was short-sighted, and, moreover, could not hear the compassionate remarks which fell from the different groups.

“ Oh, my dear, only look, I beseech you, the poor candidate has got upon his legs, and is dancing with the very queen of the festival herself ! well, it is a sure thing that she is a dear, that Miss Widen ; no one can discover the least trace of discontent upon her countenance, though it may easily be conceived that it must be extremely trying to her, to dance with such a cavalier. I could wish that all our young ladies would take a copy from her ; for my dear Madame T——, is it not quite dreadful to see how the girls, now-a-days, curl their lips, and look at their trimmings, if a poor clerk, let him be ever such a pretty lad, or, if any poor young man like that, Mr.

Mannerstedt wishes to engage them ? Oh no, they have not a *Tour* disengaged ; but if an officer, or a notary, or even a book-keeper, who has a prospect of having a counting-house of his own, should come directly afterwards—oh, they are ready at once, and scarcely blush if the person they have rejected ventures an indignant look at their rude behavior.”

“ Oh yes, indeed ; but I do think, however, that Mr. Mannerstedt might have, at least, postponed his dancing until he had made enough by his teaching to afford himself a new black suit.”

“ He would have had to wait a long time then,” rejoined the first ; “ he does carry himself beautifully, that must be allowed.”

“ Oh, certainly,” cried a third ; “ but it’s a pity that that short little skirt of his coat will waggle about so in the course of his elegant movements.”

“ Yes, ladies, yes ; is it not really too unfortunate,” said a fourth in the group, “ that

poverty and pride always go hand-in-hand? What do you think now? the royal secretary, H——, some short time ago, offered him a handsome black suit, which he had left off, for less than a quarter of its value; but, instead of accepting the offer with gratitude, what do you think that he replied? Nothing less now, the shameless boy, than that the royal secretary would oblige him very much by troubling himself no further about either his wardrobe or any other of his affairs for the future."

"Oh, that is abominable—quite horrible, 'pon honour," chimed in the other; and then they related a number of whispered anecdotes behind the poor and proud candidate's back, which they would not have ventured to repeat had he heard them; but he was, meanwhile, more agreeably occupied in leading his beautiful partner through the graceful mazes of the dance, and making many an ensign quite envious of his expertness.

When the waltz was at an end, he conducted Rosa to her seat; and, after venturing one more glance at her charming figure, he betook himself again to his solitary corner, where the rose-coloured veil of illusion was quickly rent, and he found himself once more thrust back into the cold void of reality.

Immediately afterwards the guests assembled around the sumptuously covered supper-table. The Professor was placed next the lady of the house, and was plagued out of, if not his life, certainly his patience, by the numerous sly allusions to the young couple, and the hard times, and the luck of young men who chanced to have rich and kind friends, for that, now-a-days, advancement was only to be obtained by that tiresome money, and many other hints of a similar kind; the old man could never, for his life, endure the least allusion to his wealth, when made with such intentions—and he turned and twisted his thin body here and there, and offered the counsellor's

lady a pinch of right Nörkoping snuff, which she accepted with great repugnance, which she dared not shew, in order to curry favor with the old gentleman. However, it was quite in vain that she sneezed three or four times, and wiped her poor smarting eyes, into which a grain of the pungent mixture had found its way—in vain did she try fine feeling, patience and self-denial. The Professor was pertinaciously silent, and utterly inaccessible to all her sweet and flattering remarks regarding the settlement of the young couple; she could only succeed in extracting from him the one word, “Profit, my gracious Lady Counsellor, profit.”

The lady was in despair, and, at last, gave the signal for retirement, upon which the company almost immediately broke up, and departed.

CHAPTER II.

THE PROFESSOR AND HIS NEPHEW.

CAPTAIN FERDINAND drove home with his uncle.

"My night's rest is already broken," said the latter, "and we may, therefore, just as well sit up and talk a little as go to bed and yawn."

The captain's face shewed no great inclination to accept this proposal. However, no trace of his dislike to it was to be discovered in his voice, as he cheerfully answered—

"With pleasure, uncle."

It was dark—and so the Professor could only hear—not see; they alighted from the carriage, and entered a little room where all

the furniture and every other article which it contained was so old-fashioned, that it carried one completely back into a bygone century—the old domestic brought a candle—and an aged dame, (who had been the Professor's housekeeper for many years,) in her night clothes, and half asleep, arranged a little table, placed thereon a bottle of small beer, a couple of glasses, tobacco and pipes; she then slowly took herself off, and returned with the Professor's slippers and dressing-gown. When he had divested himself of his holiday suit, and drawn off his tight, uneasy boots, and felt himself comfortably wrapped up in the dear old garment, our good Professor began to feel at home again, and signed to the old lady to retire, whilst he seated himself in his easy arm-chair. Meanwhile the captain was standing at the window, gazing between the curtains out into the bright moonlit night—his look lingered long and fondly upon the corner

house at the street end; where, in earlier and brighter days, Hilda Borgensköld had dwelt with her parent; he sighed deeply, and leaned his burning forehead against the frozen panes.

"What more sighs?" said his uncle, as he placed himself comfortably, "let bygones be bygones, my dear nephew; no use in rubbing a wound if we wish it to heal. Come here and sit down, and let me talk to you about your affairs."

The captain drew near, and took a chair on the other side of the table; he remained silent, however, and appeared to await what his uncle had to say, with some impatience.

The Professor took one long whiff after another, sipped his beer, and crossed his thin spindle-shanks.

"Well," said he, at last, "she is a dear, pretty creature, the bride!"

"Yes—pretty—but cold—cold—as if her heart was the freezing point itself."

"Then," said the Professor, "why did she say yes then? explain that."

"Because I was fortunate enough to gain her respect and good-will, and because she feels satisfied that nothing more is necessary to ensure her happiness; at least, according to the notions which she has adopted of matrimonial blessedness."

"Then," resumed the Professor, "she does no more for you than she must, and, according to my view of the matter, that ought to ease your conscience; for your love is not far off: that has remained with Hilda Borgensköld—and so, as an honorable fellow, you must no longer talk such a lot of stuff as you did this evening, when I entered the counsellor's house—for that shews you to be very double-faced—and that is a very bad quality—and the more so on such a mere casual occasion, when you were no way obliged to make a parade of feelings which you knew were but skin deep."

"But really they are not so, my dearest

uncle," objected the captain. "She is to me—"

"Oh, be quiet," interrupted the Professor, angrily. "She is nothing to you—at least, to your heart, I mean—how can you try to throw dust in my eyes in this way—when you know that this very morning you were begging, like a prisoner for life, for my consent to your union with Hilda, which, of course, meant to say, that I was to have the additional pleasure of maintaining the young couple. Had I been weak enough to accede, you would have just sent all honor and delicacy to the deuce, and have flown back to the counsellor, to give him back his contract. Fie, Ferdinand, such behaviour is unmanly and wrong. You would marry the girl because you expected by that means to become possessed of property; as the scanty pocket money allowed by your uncle and your still more scanty pay, will not furnish you with the means of keeping your dogs and horses, and wasting nights at the confounded

gaming-table ; and while I know all that, just as well as you do yourself, you want to chatter to me about feelings for the dear girl which you do not possess. I beg you will spare me all that sort of thing. I know how to judge Rosa correctly. Might God only grant that you were as worthy of her, as you are not."

"But, my dear uncle," said the captain, "I assure you that it is no hypocrisy on my part ; there have been moments, and not a few, when I felt that Rosa might become as dear to my heart as Hilda was, and alas ! is still—but her invincible coldness, or, what shall I term it, her friendly calmness, chills every warmer feeling—and then in addition the pangs of recollection and self-reproach, that I have voluntarily renounced all claim to Hilda's heart, because you, uncle—forgive my frankness—withdraw your aid. I could see very well, and wanted no grounds to convince me, that Hilda and I could not live upon air—and, therefore,

I drew back from the girl I loved, and paid my court to Rosa, with the full intention of doing my best to please her. It is certainly indisputable that my motives were interested ; but what could I do ? had I a chance left, when my uncle was inexorable ? for to plunge Hilda into unlimited wretchedness through a union with a man as poor as herself, was more than I could bear ; and just as little could I tear her image from my heart, or my own person from her side as long as I was free ; believe me, uncle, it was a painful struggle between my feelings and my reason ; but we were obliged to part. I paid my addresses—was accepted—and, half-dreaming, left Rosa, an engaged man, to go to Hilda—she as yet knew nothing—mere reports here and there existed of my frequent visits to the rich merchant's house, and of my attentions to his daughter, the beautiful Rosa. Hilda had not listened to, and could give no credit to them. Ah, uncle, that was the bitterest

hour of my life ! I told her all—that we must part without a hope of ever being united ; and, that I was engaged to another. Oh, my very heart shudders, yet, as I call to mind the look of scorn which she darted at me—she spoke not, but she was pale—pale as death. After a torturing pause of several minutes, she arose, and proudly taking leave of me, with a few cold words, wished me happiness and left me : then even at that instant, repentance, bitter repentance, seized upon me. Oh, how gladly would I have undone all again. I sent to implore her for an interview—she refused it—I wrote—she returned my letter unopened. I besought you, my dear uncle, to speak one word of reconciliation to aunt Borgensköld. All, all, was fruitless, and nothing else was left but to accommodate myself as patiently as I could to the destiny which I had brought upon myself. If Rosa only loved me, as I know that Hilda did, and if the fortune that she brings me should be as brilliant as one

has a right to hope from the rich Counsellor—then—I must endeavor to forget my youthful dreams. Indeed they are worthless and worse in a poor devil like myself, who has much ado to keep himself, and to be able to sail with the stream.”

The Professor’s sole reply to this long effusion of the captain, was merely his usual “Hum,” accompanied by a slight shake of the head.

“My uncle appears not to approve of my views,” observed Ferdinand.

“No, to say truth, my dear nephew, I do not especially approve of them ; your views and principles are somewhat elastic, and seem to possess the faculty of stretching just as far as you wish them ; and, besides this, they have but one sole point to sustain them, and upon which they all turn ; namely, that of floating upon the surface of elegant society, and this too in a manner which is totally disproportioned to your income ; and if you can but steer clear

of all the breakers, against which so many are wrecked, why 'tis all one how you do it ; but if my old eyes have not entirely lost all their former sharpness, you felt that you must obtain money some way or other, to escape some anticipated and quickly threatening reverse, and since your uncle would not advance any thing beyond the sum for your promotion, it became a matter of necessity to plunge head over ears into matrimony. I wish, with all my heart, that you may not break your neck half way. It did seem rather singular to me, that the hard, wealthy, merchant was so very ready to promise his daughter's hand to a poor captain, the ink upon whose commission was scarcely dry. Hum, hum, I have seen a good many things in my life, and have known wealthier houses than that fail—and these hints about the young people's establishment, and other things, did not particularly please me. For it is a sure thing that you will not get a penny from me, beyond the sum agreed

upon for your company, and by my soul, I rather think that was a pretty penny too."

The captain sat silent and listened to these observations gloomily enough, turning red and pale alternately, for his uncle had, in various points managed to hit the nail on the head; the worst of all, however, was the old man's casual assumption, or rather remark, regarding what he, the captain, could hardly venture to allow his mind to dwell upon the possibility of—regarding the chance of his intended father-in-law's failure. That would be too dreadful.

"Have you, my dear uncle?" he at length faltered.

"Not the very least real suspicion," interrupted the Professor, quickly perceiving the turn of Ferdinand's thoughts, "it only seems to me as if a storm may be brewing somewhere, and perhaps not far off. I may be deceived, but I have had rather a good scent in these matters all my life. Had I been in the house when, without doing me the honour of con-

sulting me, you thought proper to rush away and make your proposals to the girl, I should have decidedly and emphatically dissuaded you therefrom ; but it is unworthy to lose courage, when one has fallen into the trap ; perchance it may be possible for him to save his daughter's fortune at least. You must pay attention and see how things go. Betrothal is not marriage, and so only be cautious, and keep quiet for a time ; it is possible that the evil exists only in my imagination. I have always had a weakness for looking at every thing in the most unfavourable light ; but it is getting late, my dear Ferdinand, we must wish each other good night."

The captain shook his uncle's hand, and wished him good night in a voice scarcely audible. Alone, in his own room, he threw himself upon a sofa in a manner which did not evince a peculiarly placid frame of mind. His servant entered, to help him undress ; as soon as he had taken off his uniform coat and cravat

and emptied a couple of glasses of water he replied to the servant's inquiry as to whether his honor had any farther commands, by telling the man, rather viciously, to "go to the d—l, and leave him in peace."

The servant hastily withdrew and shut the door, and the captain, after pacing the room violently three or four times, sat down at a writing table, and taking a sheet of paper, proceeded to indite the following epistle to one of his friends a certain auditor, T——.

"MY DEAR T——,

"I am worrying myself about this whole cursed business to such an extent, that I am fit to go mad, and not without reason too; for I fear that I have got into a rather awkward scrape in venturing such a bold step, to get clear of my difficulties. Harkye, my dear Gustavus, if you like to wish me joy, you are at liberty to do so; but it strikes me that it

would be rather more rational to think of condolences. However, all the same, do as you like. This evening, my betrothal with Rosa Widen, the rich Counsellor's daughter, was celebrated at a brilliant ball, and with a heart full of Hilda, and a head still dizzy with the recollections of that unlucky night—of my bond debts, and that old fox of a Jewish hound, who will not listen to reason, I played—can you conceive the painful nature of my position—I played the enraptured, blissful lover to my beauteous bride; and she was so cold—so icy cold, that I never lavished my gallantries to such little purpose; however, it was not sufficient—not enough, that I could read Hilda's abhorrence and contempt in her every glance and movement to fill my cup even to overflowing; I had to listen afterwards to a long lecture from my old, covetous, tiresome, much respected uncle, at which I alternately perspired and shivered; and, at length, to drive me quite mad; he comes out with the most

absurd prophecies of—what think you—of the possible failure of my future father-in-law? and here I sit now writing to you to cool myself down; but my head burns, and everything goes round in a whirl. It's all well enough for my intimate friends to say—but it is but small comfort—that I am not worse off than many another poor devil, who has been just as deep in the mud as myself, and has yet got clear off in a whole skin. Hitherto, at least in outward appearance, I have been able to preserve the reputation of a man of untarnished honour—to be deprived of this inestimable jewel, however—if my person should have to take a turn within the walls of a fortress—is a confoundedly uncomfortable reflection, and the shame—the shame—for if I get my liberty again, I shall not be able to look any one in the face; and what will my uncle, my bride, what will my future father-in-law, and lastly, Hilda, think and say of me? Condemn me with one voice—that is the least

and lightest I have to expect, and then every thing is up with me. No, no—that must not happen—cannot, shall not happen. I must obviate that somehow; but what idiocies have I been scribbling. I never thought of the fact, that I tore up my last letter to you instead of sending it to the post, and that, consequently, you know nothing more regarding me than what you knew before—that I am a reckless lad, a roué, who, under the flimsy mask of refinement and an air *de société*, concealed many a trait which I dared not develop in the intimate circle of like-minded comrades. Well, now, just briefly listen, my dear Gustavus, to a description of causes which have thus transformed me from a pleasant, agreeable companion into an anxious, sickly, splenetic being, whose cheerfulness is merely an effort of dissimulation.

“ Two months ago, I received from my uncle, (be it said *en passant*—God rest his soul speedily among the angels in Paradise)

the sum agreed upon for my promotion to captain, with an innumerable lot of kind and paternal admonitions ; and I there and then solemnly promised him never, as long as I lived, to plague him with any requests for money, great or small ; for now, what with my pay, &c., I had an income sufficient, with economy, to maintain me, and gradually pay off all the debts, which I had contracted during my ensign's and lieutenant's days. I told him to believe me that I would now become a steady and respectable man, and an honour both to him and his money. Yes, I promised all that, and this time I really meant to keep my word, for my heart was quite full of Hilda, and the visions of domestic felicity which I had pictured to myself with her ; however, with the best will in the world, a man is not always able to preserve these kind of thoughts, when circumstances alter, and the tempter shews himself.

“ I started for town to settle the affair there

with my superiors, and you should now be told that at starting, I had not a single shilling in my pocket, except such travelling expenses as the old man deemed absolutely necessary, and a scanty allowance for my lodging for a couple of days there. On the very same evening on which I arrived, several officers of my acquaintance were polite enough to arrange a little wine party at Hickar's hotel; and after we had drunk freely, and made sufficient racket, and had become pretty jolly, play was proposed. Out of a confounded foolish false sense of honour, I fancied that I could not refuse to join, though I heard that high play was contemplated, and I had not even half a shilling to stake; but then, how could I urge such a reason for refusal. I made some objections, to be sure, such as that I had lost my liking for play, and so forth; but nobody listened or would listen to them—and, as usual, the d—l got uppermost.

“ Oh, brother, play !—play ! you know how

many and how great necessities brought me to misfortune ! and horribly did I pass them all in review before my mental eye, whilst my hand mechanically approached the breast of my coat, where the sum for my promotion was lodged. The confounded money burned me like fire, and the desire of joining in the game turned the very blood within my veins—I was as if bewitched, and thus, in a most hurried manner, negotiated with my uncle's advocate—my own elastic conscience. Well, and then, brother, you know beforehand how this capitulated, and I entered into a secret proviso with it, that I would sacrifice at the utmost fifty dollars.

“ It wanted a long time yet to the morrow's noon, and something might turn up by that time, and so cautiously turning aside, I produced my fifty dollars. Things were now arranged. I was in the best possible humour, for, at that, as at all times, I had the weakness to persuade myself that fortune would favor

me; but my old cursed ill-luck haunted me still.

“One ten dollar note after another was staked and lost, as if carried away by the wind. The last was in my hand.

“‘Stop—hold hard,’ urged loudly the Professor’s advocate within.

“‘But no, no,’ rejoined I, ‘not a moment before the last shilling of the allotted sum has gone to the winds, or till this has recovered what I have already lost.’

“I played and played—and lost—I was in a fever—at last came the final deal—I could scarcely breath—at last I won—the whole amount was fifty dollars—with the extremest pains I concealed my joy, under a becoming appearance of well-bred indifference, as I took up my money. Oh, had I now but been under the influence of reason—had I left off—but no, far from it—luck made me bold—I again ventured yet deeper in the game, and dearly, wofully did I pay for my presumption.

“However, my dear Gustavus, of what use is it that I should detail to you—you who are so practised in such things—all the terrible feelings and struggles of this night. In the company were several gamblers by profession. We—for I almost believe that at that time I was no better than they were—remained at the table alone ; while the rest stood around as mute spectators, with looks of strained attention ; my head was addled with strong drink, the heat, the smoke of tobacco, and the fumes of punch, I was as if intoxicated ; and, for some time, my luck was uninterrupted ; all at once fortune turned, and I lost, besides my former winnings, two hundred dollars ; several of my acquaintances now endeavored to persuade me to leave off, but in vain, a regular frenzy had possessed my soul. I proposed right or wrong, and lost time after time, until my comrades, at last, dragged me forcibly from the table to my room ; or else every stiver

would have gone to the fiend, for I no longer knew what I did.

“ Oh, the hour that followed—I passed it in a sort of senseless, stupid lethargy, which was natural after the state of exaggerated tension of the last few hours. Gradually, however, my head grew clearer, and I began to awaken to all the shuddering horrors of reality. Oh, what an awakening was this—you cannot picture it to your conception. My loss amounted to nearly seven hundred dollars. Just as I had finished counting the remaining sum, it struck eight—heaven and hell, but four hours—at twelve I was to be with my superiors about the purchase—my poor head grew dizzy—I thought I should go mad. At length, however, I so far collected my scattered senses, as to be able to follow the counsel of some friends, upon whose silence I could rely, and with whom I went to the baptised Israeli-tish merchant S——, before whom I briefly laid my position, and my wish to borrow this

sum from him; after the cursed rogue had wasted a whole precious hour in enlarging upon the untrustworthy nature of the security of such young men, and the greater hazard of lending them money, the affair was so far successful, that he lent me the seven hundred dollars at lawful interest for four months; and after all the necessary formalities had been gone through, and a snug little discount made for profit to himself, I, at last, put the money in my pocket. As I was about to leave the room, he gave me the friendly warning at parting, that if I should delay only three or four days beyond the appointed time, he would take such means as might appear to him most efficacious to make sure either of his money or my person, for he hoped to have convinced the young men whom he thus served, out of pure benevolence, that he did not understand joking in these matters. At length, I was quit of this Satan, and the same evening left the town

with my captain's commission in my pocket, and a head and heart full of grief and trouble.

“What was to be done now? You know that I loved my cousin Hilda with my whole soul; but there was no help for the uneasiness which tortured me, as the Professor was so embittered against not only the old fool, his half brother, but also his wife, that he had already some months before strictly forbidden me to think of a union with Hilda, if I had any hope at the same time that he would give his niece a portion; and when the old man once said that nothing was to be done, he might be as firmly relied upon to keep his word, as if he had given a formal deed to that effect. All this, during my journey from home, had occurred to my mind merely in the shape of light shadows, which caused the somewhat distant heaven to shine out with more clearness; but now that I was on my return, the affair took another coloring—the shadows had

perceptibly lengthened, all was dark and cold, and not one bright spot was visible in the sky. What then was the use of struggling against the stream? I accordingly allowed my airy castles to fall to ruin, and projected a plan, the only one which, according to my ideas, could possibly rescue me, from this deep and difficult strait, that namely, of paying my addresses to the rich and beautiful Rosa Widen—for you must know, brother, that since my remaining creditors have got wind of my promotion, it seems as if all the fiends of hell had got into their bodies, and assignments on my pay is the only method of satisfying them; but how can these suffice, for, at any rate, I must live; and this miserable pittance of pay, in proportion to all the demands likely to be made upon it, is but a mere drop in the ocean.

“‘No, by my honor,’ I exclaimed, as I thought over all these things in the carriage. I must marry, in order to set all these matters right. Rosa is a remarkably nice, agreeable

girl—if she will have me—I have no long time for scruples, for I am then sure of receiving with her a portion answerable to the wealth of the Counsellor.

“When, consequent upon this resolve, I had danced attendance upon my fair, future bride, for about six weeks, and had continually met with a reception, which if it gave me no decided hope, yet by no means inclined me to despair, my time allowed me no longer to defer the main point of the business—I considered it under all circumstances, the best way to feel the Commercial Counsellor’s pulse first, and to sound him ; and one day after dinner, when we were alone, and I had been manœuvring and hinting for some time, and it appeared to me as if he understood me, I came out with my proposal. After he had reflected for a time in profound silence, he commenced his reply with expressing the hope—which I silently allowed to pass without contradiction—that my uncle would be inclined to be noble and generous in

his conduct, in order to aid me to stand upon somewhat firmer ground, which for the rest, he had little difficulty in concluding would be the case, from his having advanced the sum for my promotion—in short, it was not to be thought of, that a man of such a noble turn of mind as Professor Ling, would do things by halves, and as he had besides been long aware how sincerely and affectionately I was disposed towards his daughter, he would not refuse me her hand, if I could obtain her own consent, regarding which, I might obtain personal assurance as soon as I liked.

“On the day following, I waited upon Rosa—heaven only knows whence I collected all the fine things which I said—however, she really appeared affected, and told me to come again the following evening, when she would give me a decided answer ; and now my dear Gustavus, I have nothing more to tell you ; I received her assent in her mother’s presence, and left her in a half-dream. What followed,

I will not attempt to describe, for frivolous as I am, I really do love Hilda with my whole heart, and nothing but the iron hand of necessity enabled me to renounce her. A week ago I wrote to my *Bear* at—— informing him of my approaching wealthy union, and begging at the same time in the most touching terms, that in consideration of a small additional douceur, he would add two months to the time yet remaining before my bond should fall due, as it would be very difficult to me, to bring about betrothal, marriage and portion, all in the same moment—but this very evening, one hour before I went to the *Fête*, an answer arrived, which might have set the coldest blood at the boiling point at once. ‘At the very day, and not one hour later, the money must be in his hands, or—’ the Captain will excuse me, I am compelled to be troublesome to him, and now what is to be done in such a desperate position of things, and a cold shudder comes over me, and chills the very blood in my

veins when I reflect, that the Professor must learn that I have gambled away seven hundred dollars of the purchase-money—It would be nothing impossible, that I should thus lose the whole inheritance through this confounded prank, for the old gentleman is somewhat severe in his principles, and I know that he is extremely displeased at my levity. Marriage is the sole remaining straw which I can hope to grasp at to sustain myself at this critical juncture—but what hope have I of seeing this wish so soon realized? they yielded to my entreaties, and my warmly expressed and ardent affection in making known our betrothal, but told me at the same time, that they could not hurry on the wedding. I on the other hand, who have in both matters to consider my creditors, am inclined to be of a different way of thinking, for as to the betrothal, it may just be looked upon in the light of a small piece of flesh hung out among a whole pack of hungry dogs; while the wedding on the contrary is

the entire ox, upon which each will be able to satisfy his hunger. The simile is not elegant; but the devil fetch me, if I am in any humour *entre nous*, to sweeten my words with sugar candy. I have now disburthened my heart, and believe that I shall sleep all the better for it; write to me as soon as possible, my dear fellow, and give me some good advice if you can, how a man should behave to make a father-in-law consent to matrimony before he is inclined. I really do need advice, and so put your invention to the proof, for

“Your friend,

“F. LING.”

“P.S.—Do you know brother, that I have been in such a devilish strait, that I was obliged to pledge my brown mare, just to enable me to make my bride a small present to-day? and the reward of my sacrifice was a friendly shake of her pretty head, and an

admonition to do nothing of the sort in future, as she had quite enough of those sort of things —by my soul, I fancy she will not be overstocked with them in future.”

CHAPTER III.

THE COMMERCIAL COUNSELLOR AND HIS WIFE.

THE rich speculator was seated in the corner of his snug sofa, and with easy nonchalance, fanning his round full features, somewhat flushed by the labours of the day, with his silken pocket handkerchief. His wife attired in a tasteful night dress, sat in the other corner, making up her mind to swallow a little cup of medicine, to which proceeding she evidently felt considerable repugnance.

"I rather think you do not find that very nice," said the gentleman.

"Bah! it is detestable," answered the lady, putting down the cup.

"What do you think of the Professor,

my love?" continued her husband with an air, which contained a dozen notes of interrogation.

"Think of him! that he is an old, unlicked bear, who has not the least idea of breeding, and not even good sound human understanding. Am I at liberty to speak what I think, candidly?"

"Oh, why not, my love? You have talent—you have a capacity for apprehending matters—what do you wish to tell me? Speak out freely, my dear Brigitta Mariè," said the Counsellor, in his gentlest tone.

"Well then, my dear Widen, I cannot help fearing that you have considerably miscalculated this time; for after all that I could find out—and I really did take pains to sound him—he will not lay down a couple of straws for them. I told you before that you were urging on the business too hastily, almost—almost as if it was a matter of consequence to you. You ought, in the first place, to have heard the

Professor's sentiments, and then have settled clearly with him, how much he would give his nephew should a union take place between him and our Rosa, then we should have known how we stood before we had gone as far as betrothal—at least open betrothal."

"Excuse me, my love," rejoined the husband emphatically, "but you ladies do not understand these things. It is necessary to treat men of Professor Ling's character with openness if we wish to draw them out. I feel assured that he will come to my counting-house this very day, and beg permission to impart the plan, which he has already cut and dry."

"We shall see, my good Widen, we shall see," said the lady, with an incredulous smile, "which of us has judged most correctly in this matter. I am quite sure, beforehand, that he will not come; and, moreover, that he will not lay down one *groschen* to forward the

affair; but, my friend, my dear Widen, you must just make up your mind to it, as you have not thought better of it before this, and God be praised you are well able to give your daughter a dower sufficient to make the Professor's help no matter of necessity, when the old man dies they will get everything, and so there is no reason to plague ourselves so much about it after all."

"You don't understand, my love," replied the Counsellor, and there was on this occasion probably more truth at bottom in the expression than was usually the case when he employed it. "You do not understand it, my dear Brigitta Marie. It is just exactly at this moment that I *must* look for property with my future son-in-law, for—for, in short, it is necessary."

"And why necessary, dear Widen? cannot they occupy the first floor of our house in the Südstrasse? and then I suppose they can live

very well upon the captain's pay, and the interest of the portion which you give your daughter."

"On the capital which I will give," said her husband with a lowered voice, "they might certainly live, but not upon the inconsiderable sum which I can in reality allot to my poor Rosa's portion."

"Ah, my dear Widen, how you frighten me; I could almost get a nervous attack to hear you speak so unguardedly. What has put such dismal ideas into your head, my friend?"

"The most apparent possibility that, perhaps, even in a couple of months, such will be the state of affairs," said the Counsellor, thoughtfully, and leaned back against the cushions of the sofa, while he slowly drew his hand across his forehead, which was now shadowed with a portentous cloud. His wife sat mute, she could not rightly understand

what he meant by it all. She trembled even at the thought of understanding him.

"Can you then credit, Brigitta Marie," continued her husband, "that I who have refused so many advantageous offers for our daughter would have accepted this less brilliant one, had I not felt aware of the necessity of settling her, as long as I had it in my power to do anything for her, in which I candidly confess I reckoned upon the Professor's aid? Should this fail me, on which point I must somehow manage to gain assurance, it will be better to stop the affair before it is too late, for the captain is as poor as a church mouse and over head and ears in debt besides."

"But in heaven's name, my dear Widen, what is all this, can things possibly be so bad, or do you only wish to try my firmness?"

"Both, my love," replied he with a smile, half jest, half earnest. "If it is not just altogether as bad as I have said, it is still not

impossible that it may be with me as with many others. The year has been a hard one, I have had serious losses, not one speculation has prospered, and my funds were never at so low an ebb. Meanwhile, however, misfortune is not absolutely at the door; things may yet change, but stand or fall it is absolutely necessary, as long as matters hold together, not to allow the slightest alteration to appear either in our habits or mode of life, but to keep our heads up and throw dust in peoples' eyes as long as we can; the time may come, and soon enough too, when they will look at us queerly; and you will conceive, my love, that the most profound silence, the most complete secrecy regarding what I have confided to you is absolutely indispensable. Everything depends upon no rumours getting into circulation, for should certain houses with which I have important transactions, get the least hint how matters are; all would be irrecoverably lost, and so do not let a word escape your lips,

perhaps the clouds may yet disperse and the sun shine as bright as ever again, and then it is of the last consequence that gossiping tongues should have no surmise of how near we have been to the breakers, no suspicion of a conversation which I have held with my wife in an hour of confidence, because I knew that her penetration would find ways and means to keep all inquisitive persons in the dark, and that her strength of mind would not give way if put to a serious trial."

And now the worthy speculator had got quit of his embarrassment cleverly; oh what a valuable quality is craft; had he not treated his wife thus, and tickled her vanity so shrewdly, and flattered her self-love in so gratifying a manner, by speaking to her feelings in a fashion that could not fail to charm a person of the worthy lady's character, (which consisted of a mixture of goodness and weakness) this affair would hardly have been got over without faintings, perhaps even convul-

sions ; now, however, she had been touched in the tenderest point, and wept some few, hot and moving tears, a tribute to the admiration which the lady Counsellor assumed to herself, for having listened to such an unpleasant communication with so much fortitude.

“ Ah,” she whispered in that tender and not yet quite forgotten tone in which twenty years previous she had replied to her husband’s first declaration of another kind. “ Ah, married people must share joy and sorrow together. My dear Widen, my dear old man, rely upon the firmness of your Brigitta Marie, when it is needed. But, my dear,” she immediately added, as the oppression of this deep and solemn emotion became too painful for her to bear, and obliged her to seek some respite, “ if you would only look more sharply after your people. You do not keep them in proper order, and of a surety, some of the gentlemen have played you worse tricks than you believe, for, my dear

friend, you really are, in many respects, too careless."

The good Counsellor smiled at his wife's warmth, he knew that this was her hobby, but he knew also that she was in some degree right, and he therefore held his tongue, and the lady continued.

"As to silence, of course you may be sure that I am the last person who would recommend any change in our mode of life. Not even Rosa herself shall hear a word of it, for she might, in that case, very easily adopt the unthinking resolve of breaking off with the captain—and that would be extremely silly. I see very clearly, my dear Widen, now that I am aware of the true state of things—No Lord no—rather let them marry at once, the sooner the better, for then if the worst comes, the Professor will be sure to help them."

"No, my dear, there you mistake," rejoined her husband, decidedly. "If the Professor will not put down something in the first place,

it will be of no use entangling them in matrimony. He and I together may portion them off, but alone I could not do it—and rather than expose our child to all the disagreeables and numberless privations which are inseparable from a union with a poor soldier, who must wear a gay exterior, even if in the utmost embarrassment, we will leave all to God's providence, and give the Captain his liberty again. Rosa may yet make a good match even without money. Meanwhile, there must be no overhaste, we will see what turn things take."

"Quite right, my friend," rejoined the lady, rising, "this is a subject to which we must devote deep and mature reflection. Offers for poor young ladies do not grow upon fruit trees, nowadays; and before we think of any change in a step once taken, we must know what we are about. That is no joke, and, besides, we must have some consideration for the Captain's heart—as to Rosa—I really hardly understand the the girl. I half believe she has no heart—

that is for love—for, as long as I can remember, she has never shown a sign of preference for any one of those who have paid her attention. Therefore, as far as she is concerned, I think it will not be very bad, but I really am sorry for poor Ferdinand, his love for Rosa is too affecting, indeed it is."

"Aye, aye, we must see what is to be done," said her husband, leaving his snug sofa corner, "and now, my dear, let us sleep upon it."

CHAPTER IV.

A GLANCE INTO OUR HEROINE'S HEART.

WITH our reader's permission, we will now mount another flight, and enter a large agreeable apartment, containing everything which splendor and good taste united could effect to conduce to the enchantment of the whole. In a charming little alcove stood the bed, surrounded with its white muslin curtains, beside it a small table, with handsomely bound books, and a pretty glass lamp, which cast its faint gleaming light over the delicate and beautiful form of the young and lovely Rosa. She was seated on a tabouret before the table.

Her ball dress had been laid aside, and her full beautiful figure was covered merely by the light white under garment. She had thrown a large red shawl about her shoulders, and her rich fair locks, freed from the restraints of ribbands, combs, and hair-pins, fell down in graceful negligence over her neck and shoulders. It was a picture of exceeding loveliness and captivation, as, her head resting upon her hand, she bent over the table to read in the book which lay open before her, but in the thoughtful expression of her eye, as she raised her looks and fixed them upon another object, was something which would have convinced any one who had chanced to see her at this moment, that her mind was elsewhere while she ran over page after page, and as often read them over again as if to force her attention to the matter they contained. Wearied at length, by her fruitless efforts, she shut the book, allowed her hand to drop upon her lap, and her head to fall upon one shoulder, and

thus lost in still and profound thought, a whole hour slipped imperceptibly away, at last she started violently, as if she had just awakened from a bright dream of bliss to cold prosaic reality. The book had fallen from her hand upon the carpet at her feet, she stooped, picked it up, and lightly touched it with her lips, as if to expiate the sin she had been guilty of towards it. It was a book of religious consolation, and Rosa's heart was a temple where holy angels daily ministered, for it was pure, pure, as early dew-drops. She now slowly arose, placed the book upon the table, trimmed the expiring lamp, and, going to a writing table, took from thence a port-folio, which she regarded with deep emotion. She resumed her seat, and holding the portfolio in her outstretched hand, was evidently irresolute whether to open it or not.

“Why not?” murmured she, half aloud.
“Yes, once more will I look upon them, and then let the flames consume their bright colors,

even as the fresh bright life will soon wither in the heart of her who painted them—with them will be rent the first, last, and only page, which agitated my being with feelings so holy, so incomparable, and so little akin to earth.”

She opened the little port-folio, and drew forth three pictures, which represented as many scenes of times gone by, and which she had sketched from memory. She now unrolled one of them, and held it towards the lamp. Should we venture to take a peep over our heroine’s shoulder, we might, perhaps, discover somewhat regarding the idea, which had guided her hand in her sketch—pity that the lamp gives no brighter light—all appears dim and indistinct. However, the picture would appear to represent a chamber, in which two figures are visible, the one of whom in the centre leans, with a sort of haughty nonchalance, upon a Spanish cane, while he regards, with a degree of condescending graciousness, the other, who is standing about a couple of paces from the door. This figure, with its

black costume, and beautiful features, and the proud and noble air, which is so expressive even in its humble position, we recognise at once as our acquaintance of the ball-room—there can be no mistake: so true, and to the life has the likeness of Frank Mannerstedt been given.

The first of the figures is not quite so distinctly evident, or perhaps, Rosa has carefully placed the light so as to leave it dim—we cannot exactly state how that may be; but, from what we do see of the outline, and the somewhat lofty air, we guess that we are once more to bid our friend, the Commercial Counsellor, good night.

In the back ground of the room, appears, half concealed by the heavy drawn-down curtains, a youthful form, in whose kindly, charming features may be read the purest compassion, and this is evidently the artist herself—the modest, lovely Rosa.

“Ah,” sighed the dear girl, “thus—just

thus—did he stand yonder at the door; and my father had the heart to let him stand there, while, in a tone, which I never can forget, he enquired whether the Counsellor required a language or music-master for his children. Oh, still, still, do my cheeks burn with shame, when I remember how my father received his offer in a manner, which plainly shewed that he did it from compassion, (though he had been looking for a clever music-master for the boys) and then offered him eight shillings* Banco for the hour; and how each of these intellectual and noble features spoke of deeply wounded feeling—while the dire scourge of necessity extorted from him a silent bow of assent.”

She allowed the painting to sink down upon her lap, and put her little white hand over her eyes. What were the subjects of the other two pictures, we remain in ignorance; for our heroine again resumed her forward stooping

* About one shilling English money, or rather less.

position, and thus shaded the treasures which she so highly valued. With a clear conscience, however, we may venture to draw some one or two conclusions from Rosa's expressions.

"The little monkeys," said she, and an affectionate smile played over her beautiful lips, "how lamentable they do look, with their violins against their little red chins—ah—" and the smile took another expression, as sweet as it was pensive—"ah! just so did I see him, his high white forehead slightly ruffled with impatience as the little fiddlers unmercifully tortured his ears—how he slightly raised his foot to mark the time, and stretched out his hand with the bow, to shew the notes. Poor, poor, Mannerstedt," she murmured, in a still lower tone than she had spoken the last words. "Hard, and thankless, and painful is thy bread to gain. Oh, my God, if I might venture to do something for him—but—no, no—I dare not. Either I should hurt his pride, or he

would cast a glance into the deepest recess of my heart—no, it is impossible—neither of those things must be.”

“ And of what an hour does this, too, remind me ?” began Rosa again, as, after a short pause, her hand unrolled the last picture ; as she bent over it, her tears fell down upon it in streams, imperceptibly to herself, staining the drawing which was rendered indistinct to her view by the emotion which, at this instant, overmastered her soul. Rosa’s lips uttered no word as to the occasion of the deep feelings which were reflected in her eyes.

However, as we should like very much to gain some little acquaintance therewith, we will look about, and see if we cannot, somehow, discover some probable light on the subject.

In the open drawer of her writing-table, on the top of other things, is a little book in a green morocco-binding ! perhaps if we were to

open it, it might betray the secret. With our reader's permission, we shall endeavour to read a page or two out of Rosa's diary.

29th *September*, 1826. *Evening*.

“ Oh, what a day—oh, what a world of sorrow and of blessedness, cannot the human heart contain; but to Thee, oh, Heavenly Father, belongs of right the first warm gratitude of my soul. Thine all-seeing eye looked down with love, and sent a deliverer to rescue my young life in that terrible and critical moment; and next to the Almighty disposer of our destinies, the grateful feelings of my heart are due to him. Let me once more recal, in slow detail, every circumstance of this hour, so rich in suffering and in joy. This morning early, I would have gone out to our little country villa, to inspect all my improvements and plans, which our clever new gardener has it in charge to execute. I

had so often made this little trip alone, the more as I experienced a kind of childish pleasure in driving my father's fiery horse; as to danger, I never even dreamed of it. Delighted, I packed up all my little wants for the day, mounted the Droschky, and drove off, nodding gaily to mamma, who was standing at the window, and called out—

“‘Take care of yourself, Rosa—hold the reins firmer.’”

“We passed through a couple of streets splendidly; but, at the corner of the third, I perceived Mannerstedt, who, with some books under his arm, was returning home from one of his lectures. I know not how it was that I could not meet him thus unawares without being sensible of a violent beating at my heart. I only wished to salute him slightly as I passed; but even the thought of such a trifle as a bow so completely engrossed me, that my attention was withdrawn from the movements of the horse; scarcely did the

animal feel the reins relaxed, than he shied at some chance object, and started off towards a cross street, against the turning of which I should inevitably have been dashed to pieces had not Mannerstedt, quicker than lightning, rushed forward, and, with a strength which God alone could have given him, seized, and fortunately succeeded in holding the horse until I could spring out. However, he was utterly unable to master the infuriated animal any longer; he received a shock which threw him senseless to the other side of the street. The horse continued his mad career, and never stopped until he had dashed the Droschky up against the last corner house at the end of the street, broken it into fragments, and so entangled himself in the harness, that he was brought to a stand-still. People ran up, and everything was soon quiet again, except my heart, for in deadly anxiety I had seen Mannerstedt carried away as if lifeless—how I myself got home I scarcely knew—but

deeply agitated and excited—which, as mama said, after the fright I had undergone, was quite natural.

“I sat upon a sofa, and never ventured to ask a question regarding him of whom my thoughts were full, when, oh what joy thrilled through my whole being, as papa entered, and Mannerstedt with him. The most eloquent smile was upon his lips, as, bowing deeply, he assured me that he had not received the slightest injury, but had merely been stunned by the shock. I said nothing, for emotion deprived me of the power of utterance; he, however, received a look full of heart-felt gratitude, and appeared well satisfied.

“My father related, how that having come out into the street where the accident had occurred, to see after the remains of his handsome Droschky, he had learned that his daughter had escaped sharing the fate of the carriage solely through the resolution and happy intervention of Candidate Mannerstedt.

“ ‘Thankful for the heroism which the young man had shewn for us,’ added my father, with an obliging smile, ‘I was anxious to see how he was himself, and therefore climbed those deuced steep stairs, whereupon I had the satisfaction of finding Mr. Mannerstedt fully restored to recollection, and out of all danger. I fancied that Rosa, in case they should have recognised each other in all this hubbub, would be anxious to hear something of her deliverer, and therefore brought him with me, to pass the rest of the day here, in order that my daughter as well as my wife and myself might have an opportunity of expressing our gratitude for what he has done for us.’

“ And with this little speech, papa believed the debt for the rescue of his daughter fairly paid, and departed to his counting-house as quietly as if there had never been the least question of any danger at all. Oh, what a calm, beautiful day did we not all pass together ! perhaps, the only one of pure, un-

mingled happiness which my life may know. As Mannerstedt rose to depart, papa said—

“‘I know that Mr. Mannerstedt’s Sundays are disengaged—if it will give him pleasure, my home and table are open to him on all holidays.’

“The young man bowed, stammered something about gratitude, and took his leave.”

Here we will break off our reading, and listen to Rosa, who is again beginning to speak.

“‘Oh, Mannerstedt, noble, high-souled as thou art, why must thy life be so poor and joyless—why must our courses run so far apart? they never can unite—no—never—never.’

“She sighed deeply, pressed her hands upon her tearful eyes, and gave free vent to the feelings which secure from every human eye, lay hidden in the inmost sanctuary of her heart.

“At length, she gathered up the pictures, stirred up the fire in the stove, and was just upon the point of making a little bonfire of them, when an impulse, mightier even than duty itself, restrained her hand.

“‘Wherefore,’ murmured she, ‘should I deprive myself of this one joy? why, surely it is no sin to possess them. Have I not already, for months, known how to control each look, each word, and every action—have I not beheld those eyes, when they believed themselves unnoticed, fixed upon me, with that expression of heart-felt, of inexpressible devotion—and have I not restrained myself so far, as to shew myself only friendly, calm, unreserved, and indifferent, when it was so necessary to do so? and so shall it be still. But one dim surmise that his feelings had found an echo in my own, and the struggle between passion and reason would rise up in his heart to an overpowering height, and without leading to the result he wished; while he, tossed

and agitated by the alternate struggle of fear and hope, would at last sink under its influence; but no, it shall be spared him—have I not to avoid the possible temptation to us both, that in some unguarded hour we might betray the secret of our hearts, and thus deprive the poor youth of the insignificant support which he earns in my father's home—for at the very least appearance of such a suspicion, my father would dismiss him at once. Have I not made the most difficult but only sacrifice, which could rescue us both from folly, when, following my parents' wishes, I engaged myself to Ferdinand? Now I am his bride—soon to be his wife, and, with God's assistance, will find in my own soul, the strength, the support to enable me to discharge faithfully the duties I have taken upon me. I do believe that Ferdinand is an honorable man—a little unsettled and perhaps flighty—but time will mend that; and if we should not be exactly as happy with each other as a union founded

on mutual affection can make people—yet the joint participation in the many trials and joys of domestic life, though not supplying a compensation for the lack of other feelings, yet offers us a calm, friendly, and kindly relation, to which I can habituate myself without repugnance, since the hope of real bliss can never, never, no, not even in this moment, exist in my heart.’”

Our readers will please to observe, that Rosa Widen was no heroine of romance, or she would undoubtedly have both acted and thought otherwise; whilst the thoughts and feelings which we have endeavoured to describe had been passing in her mind, she had rolled up the paintings again, and consigned them to the portfolio—a calm, sweet peace was in her eyes, as she said, aloud—

“Yes, I can retain them without a feeling of self-reproach; they are but a few kindly

sunbeams, rescued from my bygone existence, with which I may at times rejoice my eyes."

When she had closed the portfolio, and replaced it in the drawer, she again opened her book. Its sacred words were no longer lifeless characters to her heart; the more she read, did the voice of peace speak in soft and gentle accents, the more impressively did the light of truth dawn upon her soul—tranquillised, and with a fervent prayer upon her lips for him whose name her lips but lightly whispered, the lovely child laid herself down in her white, virgin bed, and soon had the soothing influence of sleep closed Rosa's beauteous eyes.

In case our reader should not have been utterly wearied by our numerous evening visits, we will make one more, which perhaps may not be altogether without its interest.

CHAPTER V.

THE STUDENT'S ATTIC.

OUR poor candidate, who, during supper, had been assigned his place at the corner of a side-table, slipped out, unobserved, into the passage as soon as the guests had returned to the saloon, and seeking out his little, grey, twice-turned, and scanty cloak, threw it over him, crushed his cap down upon his brown curls, so as almost to cover his eyes, for the night wind was sharp, and Mannerstedt's sight had suffered from incessant nightwork ; he cast one more half-stolen glance back towards the saloon, and then rapidly descended the steps

into the street ; the severe cold of the December night somewhat cooled the flush upon his cheeks, and the fever of his blood ; the stormy heart grew calmer and more composed, the impetuous excitement of his feelings was allayed ; he slackened his pace, and walked more slowly along the narrow streets. At length, he stopped before a house of tolerably respectable appearance, went up, passing the first and second floors, and then commenced climbing a long, crooked stair leading to the garret. At last, he reached his point. After groping about awhile in the dark, he found the door, put his key in the latch, and after one or two fruitless endeavors, succeeded in opening it.

Mannerstedt now stood in a dark, cold, little chamber, the few objects in which were lighted only by the pale moon ; he laid aside his cap and cloak, and hung up his faithful servants on a nail in the door ; he then cautiously approached an old, rickety table, which was

placed near the sorry bed ; he quickly found fire-box and matches, struck a light, and lit a thin candle, which had been ingeniously fastened into a most defective tin-candlestick.

The aspect of Frank Mannerstedt's solitary apartment was gloomy and cheerless in the extreme ; it was low, with an arched roof, like a cabin, and not much larger ; the furniture consisted, besides the bed, of one writing table, one small press, which was crowded inside and out with books, paintings, and pieces of music, and a large travelling chest, with three chairs. Oh, could they have spoken, these dark, grey walls, they might have told many a strange tale—of how a noble but poor youth had often nearly stupified himself in its narrow limits by close and unbroken application for whole days and nights together, allowing himself leisure but for one or at most two short meals daily, by way of absolutely necessary refreshment ; and yet he was always submissive to his destiny, and fervently grateful

to his God when he could, after all his weekly expenses were defrayed, put by a poor solitary coin, the fruit of bitter struggles and sore self-denial, to aid the necessities of his mother, and sometimes another, to form a little fund, upon which he rested the hope of being able to keep his academical terms.

And further could these walls have told of all the bitter, painful struggles, eating deeply into the soul itself, when the human heart bowed and broken, must pay its tribute to weakness, for even the strongest nature, the noblest fortitude, will at times succumb for a moment under the pressure of continual wrestling with want and renunciation, and then when yet another feeling comes, and creeps into the unguarded heart, to make it feel in sad perfection, how many torturing pangs can find a dwelling in the human breast, then, oh then, the cup is full, even to the brim—such hours of consuming bitterness work mightily upon the soul, and its sorrows

are known but to God, and the poor struggler alone, as he humbles himself even to the dust, to kiss the hand that has laid the cross upon him—however, of such moments as these, there were but few in Frank Maunerstedt's life; for his will was strong in all that was right and good, his heart pure, and great his faith, and moreover his fortitude in the endurance of every suffering and privation, was strengthened by a hope which forbade him to complain, when repining would even have struck upon his mind as madness, his character was inwardly as well as outwardly, a pattern of the most perfect harmony—calm, strong, and full of self-control.

And might not these old walls, too, have told of other hours, when Frank would sit before his scanty fire in the long, still twilight, and with his hand before his eyes, conjure up bright, cheerful, glorious pictures to glad his mental vision? at such hours he was in idea already the rector of the school at B——, in-

habited the large, handsome, spacious school-house, and had a lovely wife, whose features bore a strong resemblance to Rosa Widen; while a multitude of little bees, which found a shelter in the house, and in the baskets outside in the landing swarmed around, and lulled him with their busy hum; however it not rarely occurred that the entire splendid phantasmagoria was at once dispersed, as if by the wind, when the maid who belonged to the occupants of the second floor, entered to make his bed, and would simply ask what the candidate was sitting there, and dreaming about by himself, and then Mannerstedt would rouse himself, and jump up with blushing cheeks, and look just like a poor sinner caught in the very act. Nevertheless in the next twilight hour, he was dreaming away again, or letting his soul soar on the wings of music to the realms of fancy; let us however return to the present moment—he had lighted his candle, set it straight in the candlestick, and now ap-

proached the table at the window, where lay his writing materials, papers, and books.

"I cannot sleep, and I must not indulge my fancy," he said, as he took off his black coat, turned it, and laid it across the arm of the chair and then drew on an ancient brown garment, with large metal buttons, and skirts of a couple of ells in width, an heir-loom from his late father, and a kind of treasure, which now served him at once as morning, reading and dressing gown, and was most appropriate for its purpose, as its voluminous dimensions were sufficient completely to envelop our somewhat delicate friend. "I will not muse," said Mannerstedt, as he wrapped the trusty old brown servant faster about him. "It is of nouse, and my dreams like all dreams, would be but will-o'-the-wisps to lead me astray; true" he added, and his tone was less cold, less firm—"true, it burns and glows warm enough here, but I will not, I dare not be weak—struggle and self denial have been my lot for many a

year, but repining could never yet file off one, even the smallest link from the mighty chain of events. I will be strong—never, no by heaven, never shall my feelings betray themselves—and, but what if they should have ever done so—but no, and if they have, she has not observed it, it was in truth too unworthy of note, how could she, who stands too high even to think of such audacity on the part of the poor candidate, have been able to cast a glance into his heart—no, and it is well it is so, for in this point at least, I could not bear even her compassion, but what am I doing now but dreaming? I'll get my books, my essays, and seek to muse on them."

He seated himself, and begun to turn over the leaves of various works, but it would not do. "Well, well, I have still my last friend in need," said he, and again rising, he shoved aside the objects in which he had vainly striven to interest himself. "My own sole, true friend, in good fortune and bad alike, we under-

stand each other best through all the vicissitudes of fate;" and he took down his violin, extinguished the light as something superfluous, and the more so as it was his last candle, and there was but one eighteen shilling* bit left in his purse. No sooner had his bow touched the strings, than his whole being was attuned to harmony with the beautiful and powerful tones, which he drew from his instrument, for few were such adepts, and so completely heart and soul in the divine art, as Frank Mannerstedt. Oh! in how many a bitter hour, had it led him to calm, to light and peace; and now too, during one of his most bitter, most painful moments, it failed not, as ever, to sooth his spirit and his heart with its kindly influence; but while the soft, floating sounds of melody are filling the room, and making for themselves a path to the heart oppressed with painful struggles, we will cast a casual glance, for our reader's benefit, at

* Vide note page 76.

Frank Mannerstedt's earlier life and destinies. His father had been an official in L——, and was tolerably well off. Frank was the only son, and now the only child, for the sisters were all dead. He had, as long as he could remember, been brought up to become a worthy scion of learning and letters. In the study which had been selected for him, he had already, as a boy, manifested great parts, and an ardent desire of knowledge, which astonished his teachers, and gained for him their good will, as well as at times the suitable rewards for his industry and perseverance. Notwithstanding this, he was never disliked by his comrades, for, even at this early period, he possessed the art of making himself beloved—in their little sports of mimic war, and other exercises, they could as little surpass him, as in the paths of learning, as his expertness and activity supplied what he wanted in bodily strength; and for the rest, he was always the most obliging and good-natured youth in the whole school, a sort of living lexicon,

to which a great portion of the others were in the habit of constant reference, to gain assistance and explanation in their different tasks, themes, translations, &c. He never made a vaunt of his progress, but pressed forward on his course calmly and kindly, gentle and universally beloved; when he had done with school, he went to the Gymnasium, and after an abode of three years there, departed for his home, to spend the Christmas holidays. Spring was destined to see him enter upon a more important course at the University, he was then seventeen; and the youth fully answered to the promise of the boy; he was received by his beloved parents with open arms, for he was their only hope; with deep and heart-felt joy his father read the testimonials which he had brought home from the Gymnasium, it was so satisfactory and tranquillising to the father's heart, to see how the seed began to ripen, and give promise of an abundant harvest.

His old mother, whose son was her idol, could not sufficiently glad her eyes in gazing at the handsome, lively, well-mannered and ready lad; and how did her heart beat with pardonable pride and pleasure, when others also praised the stately handsome youth, who carried himself so well, played his violin so cleverly, and sang so astonishingly.

These talents united to a staid and modest demeanor, procured for him numerous invitations; and in every circle which he visited he was made much of and beloved.

The Christmas passed in all manner of uninterrupted amusements, like one long day of happiness, and the remaining winter months also glided over in the same even tenor of quiet enjoyment. The ice soon broke up, and the Schuyts, a kind of post and passenger boats, were loaded, and on one of the principal our hero took his passage for Malmö, from whence he was to proceed on to Lund. For the time previous to his departure, mama's

hands were naturally fully occupied in collecting all the necessary equipments. Linen, night-caps, and collars in abundance, were prepared by two seamstresses. The tailor was busy with the new blue frock, which was to form the student's uniform, as well as a cloak and overcoat, for which his affectionate mother had herself spun the yarn, and which was therefore so fine, soft, and close that no one could have taken it for anything but cloth. All this, however, was but as a drop in the ocean, in comparison with the endless multitude of thin well-baked biscuits, sausages, hams, butter, salted herrings, and thick loaves of bread, "which were packed up for the dear boy."

"For, father," Mrs. Mannerstedt, would say to her husband, "he must have his breakfast and supper at home."

His father had no objection to make, to this arrangement, as his residence in Lund was likely to cost quite enough, but go he must,

there was no help for it, for Upsala was too far off.

“And it is no cheaper there either,” sighed Mr. Mannerstedt, as he thought of the hard times and his own sensible want of funds.

At length the important day arrived, and with it the agitating farewell hour. The father's emotion was great; he, however, managed to control the dark foreboding which whispered to his heart that it was the last time that he should embrace his son; with calmness and resolution he gave store of good admonitions to his Frank, and many a friendly profitable piece of counsel for his future life, and his new position—the mother sobbed on her darling's neck—

“May God bless thee, my own dear loved boy! Never forget thy father's instructions, and think upon thy mother, on her entreaties and tears, when tried by the temptations of which, alas, there is no lack in this sinful

world. Then, my boy, stand firm, my good brave Frank, and continually bear in mind that we live not for this brief and unquiet world alone, but that, in that which is to 'come hereafter, we must yield account, and," added the good provident old lady, in a lower tone, "should you be very much straitened for money, look at the bottom of the chest, between the third sausage and the large cheese is a little savings bank, which I have made up for thee, but only in case of need—mind, think well of this Frank; and now, fare-thee-well, may God take thee into His holy keeping, and may His angels be about thy path, forget not thine old mother, and think upon her last advice."

"Never," faltered Frank, "never, dearest mother," and he pressed the dear loved hand to his lips and tearful eyes. "Never, never will I, I promise most sacredly, prove unworthy of the affection and infinite goodness of my own dear parents. This moment shall be im-

pressed upon my soul in bright and living characters, and it shall be to me a guardian angel."

"Well, then, the peace of God be with thee!" said his father, as he dashed away a tear which was stealing down his manly cheek. "We must have done with this—the wind is fair, and all things are ready." He pushed the youth before him. "There, go thou first, boy, and close the door thyself."

This was a thing which the old man esteemed of the highest importance for the good fortune of the traveller, that he should shut the door behind him, himself; his parents followed, and on the beach they once more bade each other an affecting farewell. Young Mannerstedt sprang on deck, and the numerous articles which his kind mother's care had collected for him, were put on board, the sails were hoisted, the wind was fresh and fair, the little crew, busied with the rigging, shouted and cried, the passengers arranged their goods

and the schuyt glided away from the landing. Frank stood on the bow and with his handkerchief waved a last farewell, his parents returned the greeting from the shore. Soon, however, they faded from each others' eyes, and their common prayers ascended to the throne of The Eternal, during those swift and solemn moments. Who has not known and felt the bitterness of a farewell hour, even when faith and hope of a future happy re-union stand beside us as consoling angels.

We might, if so minded, fill many a page with the interesting though unimportant events which occurred during the voyage as well as on his arrival at Malmö; his first *début* at Lund—his visits with his recommendatory letters, waiting on the Professors—his entrance into the noble band of students—the letter from his dear mother, with so many welcome dollar-notes—and that from his father with as many admonitions and larger remittances—and lastly, I might tell how the hearty, kind,

newly-made friends of our hero, politely and readily helped him to eat his sausages, hams, cheese and bread, biscuits, &c., and how pleasant it was for many hungry souls, not only to come in for a portion, but to be allowed to share like brothers. All this, however, would probably but little interest the sympathies of our readers, of those, at least, who are unacquainted with University life and manners, and, therefore, we will omit it, and pass on to matters of more consequence.

Mannerstedt had been about a year at Lund, when his father died; and instead of, as had been universally believed, leaving a pretty property behind him, after all had been sifted and sorted by good friends and creditors, there was scarce left, as the proverb hath it "a nail in the wall." Indeed it was even worse than the proverb, for not even the walls themselves were left to drive the nail into. The old, dear, pleasant home, where the good couple had dwelt for so many a peaceful happy year, was

sold with the rest, and a little insignificant house, containing a couple of rooms, which Mr. Mannerstedt had used as an office during his official life—a very small quantity of house gear, and a few hundred rix-dollars, were all that the widow had left. It was a stern and heavy blow for her old days to be obliged to leave the dwelling which contained all her dearest recollections: but the bitterest stroke of all to her, good lady, was the conviction that this misfortune would hinder the progress of her darling's academical career, and it was not to be wondered at, if everything was dim and cheerless in her soul as she left the handsome, aye, well nigh sumptuous home, and repaired to the little grey cottage, where she was to pass the remnant of her melancholy pilgrimage on earth.

The first sunbeam which shed a bright ray through the darkness was a letter from Frank, couched in terms of the deepest sorrow on his

dear mother's account. Every word spoke the lively expression of his warm child-like affection and his heart-felt tenderness; he would strive and labour, and it would go well with him; with the blessings of the best of mothers, he trusted that God would grant him a fortunate result to his exertions, and then doubly, doubly sweet would be the reward, which had been purchased by necessity and self-denial.

Thus wrote Frank, and not enough that he so wrote, he thought so also; his pure, noble feeling, his vital, all-sacrificing devotion, re-awakened the dulled and stricken energies of Mrs. Mannerstedt to new life and vigor. She began to think of all kinds of expedients—partly to gain her own maintenance, and partly to be enabled to provide her darling with some trifle, every now and then. Various undertakings were tried, but were crowned but with small success; then Mrs. Mannerstedt remembered that, in earlier days, when her

Home and Table were among the best in the town of B——, her guests had always greatly praised her especial good beer.

“I will brew and sell it,” she exclaimed, with a sensation of joy, which those only can conceive who themselves, under the scourge of necessity, have felt what an overflowing sense of blessedness the thought of having found something which may lead to fortune, excites in one who has said farewell to hope and joy.

Mrs. Mannerstedt commenced her brewing with a brave and joyous heart, and it succeeded admirably; she put her own hand to everything, for she had always been a notable housewife; and when warmly clothed, she sat upon a stool, on the late winter evenings, before her clean, tidy casks, and filled her bottles, and held out the wax-candle in her cold and shaking hand, to see if each contained enough, and whether it run fresh and clear; it might happen then that sometimes, as she thought of the dear old father who had gone to his rest,

and of her own better by-gone days, a tear would trickle over the furrowed cheek ; but it quickly dried as she considered that her present exertions might possibly, in some measure, relieve the hard necessities of her beloved son ; and she had in her hands, likewise, accounts which spoke, it is true, of his uninterrupted industry, and of an application even excessive, but which mentioned also that his necessities were becoming every day more pinching, and that, during the last half year, he had been compelled to sell his watch, and several other articles of value.

When Mrs. Mannerstedt thought of all this, and saw how the beer foamed and sparkled, there arose also a beam of happiness in her heart, for she hoped to be able to aid Frank ; and with light steps and as light a heart, she would spring into her little shop, and deliver a bottle of her good beer in exchange for an eight-shilling bit, and when she was lucky, would sometimes sell a dozen in a day.

Who was then happier than Mrs. Mannerstedt—a mother alone can fully conceive it—when she had saved up the considerable sum of twenty rix-dollars? oh, it was a day of rejoicing out of all measure, and she sent for her old friend and adviser, Counsellor Sifver, who, with great pleasure, undertook to send the money to an old friend of his in Lund, for it would have been lost labor to have sent it to Frank himself, he would never have accepted the money which had cost his dear mother the sacrifice of her nightly rest, and many another act of self-denial, to save up. No; he would rather have starved, and have frozen; but the old Counsellor's man of business knew how to manage the matter, and through his careful arrangements, one of Mannerstedt's most pressing debts was paid, and then others, for, as long as the mother had anything to nourish herself with, the stream never ceased to flow for Frank's benefit also.

And thus passed away two years. The

agent at Lund had given Frank a hint, that the considerable pecuniary aids, which so often excited his astonishment, proceeded from an old friend of his father's, who was in good circumstances, but wished to remain unknown in order to escape thanks. Young Mannerstedt, himself gifted with such fine feelings, fully appreciated the magnanimity and delicacy of his unknown benefactor's proceedings, and, therefore, only thanked the friend, who thus sought to mitigate the burden of his distress, in the silent recesses of his heart, and in his warm prayers to his God. It was now the beginning of summer, and Mrs. Mannerstedt had urgently besought Frank to come to her during the vacation. She solemnly assured him that it would not burden her the least, but, on the contrary, bestow upon her an exceeding happiness, and she had got everything ready for him, and in truth so she had for she had sold her last treasure—her golden snuff-box—in order to supply her household

against the return of her inexpressibly beloved son. Frank could not resist the hearty and affecting entreaties, he packed up his books, his papers, his music, and the violin itself, with his sensibly diminished wardrobe, started for Malmö, and thence, as chance would have it, home, upon the same schuyt in which he had sailed when he left it, but also under what different prospects. Such, however, is the ordinary course of life; to-day joy and peace—to-morrow storm and trouble—nothing but change. How shall we describe Mrs. Mannerstedt's delight when the tall, well-grown stripling sprang up the stairs to his mother's arms, which trembled so violently that they could scarcely fold him in their embrace. Ah, that was a day of joy and festival which angels might have witnessed; she had decked out the one little chamber, which was at once her largest and best, for Frank's reception; all the best of everything which she had remaining was collected there, and every-

thing looked so neat and tidy and orderly. Frank silently pressed his mother's hand to his lips, and heaven was in his soul, for there was bliss in seeing himself so beloved ; he knew but too well that all the little *agrémens* which the little chamber contained must have cost his mother many sacrifices, and how dear to him did that assurance make it all.

Three sweet and happy months passed away in the quiet engagements of family life. Frank, as usual, worked diligently, but his leisure hours were agreeably spent in strolling about the dear, well-known country round, and visits to old and dear friends, who, we must say it to their honour, distinguished themselves from friends in general, by making no distinction between past and present days, but overwhelmed young Mannerstedt with invitations ; of these, however, Frank declined the greater number, for, as we have mentioned, for one reason, his wardrobe was not flourishing, and he had outgrown his clothes, and they were,

therefore, not becoming in such circles; and, for another, that he wished to give all his leisure hours to his dear mother and his more intimate youthful friends. At the beginning of the half year Frank was to return to Lund; a couple of days before the great day of sadness and of parting, Mrs. Mannerstedt, who was busy with her preparations for the provision basket, had a great deal to do in the little kitchen, and Frank collected and packed all his things. Whilst thus engaged it occurred to him that he had forgotten something that his mother had put away for him, and he went in to fetch it; but as Mrs. Mannerstedt was busy in the kitchen, and he saw the drawer was open where, as he remembered, his mother kept the articles in question, he drew out the drawer and began to look for what he wanted; by chance he fell upon a bundle of old papers, the handwriting on which resembled the accounts which he had formerly got from the person in Lund who

supplied his frugal dinners ; he could not resist his desire to open the packet, but how shall we describe the crowd of at once sweet and painful sensations which assailed his affectionate heart, when he found that it had been his old mother, who, by dint of the sacrifice and self-denial, had been paying his monthly bills for more than two years ? Two big tears, the first which poverty had wrung from him, stole forth from his long, dark eye-lashes. Sadly did his looks linger upon the bills spread out before him, and the colour left his lips as they quivered with a momentary tremor. At this moment Mrs. Mannerstedt came in, and as the clouds disperse before the brightness of the sun, so vanished the gloomy expression from Frank's countenance, as he beheld her who knew no more beautiful name than that of mother.

“ Oh, mother's heart, thou most glorious of our Creator's work,” were the only words that he could utter, as he threw himself into the

arms which were opened to receive him—a few seconds, in which lay all that life had had most precious to bestow, passed like a foretaste of heavenly bliss in solemn silence; then Frank recovered himself, manly earnest shone in his features, and lent energy to his voice, as he slowly and firmly said—

“And now my mother, my own tenderly inexpressibly beloved mother, promise me, I conjure you, if you wish my soul to enjoy peace, to do this no more. Oh, I feel but too, too well what it has cost you! How these dear hands have toiled lest Frank should hunger. Oh, mother, mother, my heart could break with sorrow at the same moment that it swells with bliss, as I regard these papers, but no, this money oppresses me too heavily. Make me easy then with a solemn promise to let me take care of myself in future.”

Mrs. Mannerstedt was obliged to yield, and she found herself now too in such a denuded state, that only the most inventive love, con-

joined with the most careful circumspection, and the greatest though silent sacrifice of her own few remaining things, had enabled her to keep house during the last fortnight. Joyfully would she pay for all when Frank was gone, could she but while he stayed, manage to conceal the real state of things, and she succeeded. The last few remaining hours were spent in kind affectionate converse, and Frank allowed himself, like a good child, to be lulled by his mother's tenderness ; and departed, not even half suspecting how dearly she would afterwards have to expiate these three sweet and happy months.

In order to render further help superfluous, Frank, at the close of the next half year, took a situation as tutor for a year, and a trying, bitter year it was to him, for his patron, as well as the lady mother, were empty, stupid people, who imagined that it was an especial mark of nobility and good tone to treat a tutor as a sort of upper servant.

After undergoing this purgatory, Mannerstedt returned to his old employment, and toiled with a light and elastic spirit, and with firmness and perseverance pursued the course he had chosen. As the times became harder, he was again compelled to take a situation, and in this alternative of autumn and winter, for a real gleam of spring or summer could never be said to cheer him, gradually passed four years. As he was now quite tired of being a tutor, and as with such small incomings, he could not possibly continue his academical studies, he determined, at the persuasion of Mr. Sifver, whose friendship and advice he had always valued, to settle for half, or perhaps a whole year, in the same town where he now was, and where the Counsellor had numerous acquaintances, who had assured him that a master of music and languages would be a most welcome guest among them.

"At least," said Frank, to himself, as he argued in his own mind, the pros and cons of

this proposal, "at least I can manage to earn so much that next spring half year I can again go down to Lund, and then, with God's help, I will remain there until I have finished my course."

He went—Counsellar Sifver had already written letters to form some few connections for him, so that he found employment at once. As it was necessary to place his establishment on the most strictly economical footing, he hired the little garret where we now find him, and took in daily a frugal meal for his dinner, which was often obliged to furnish his supper also, and studied the while the praiseworthy science of domestic economy, in as many branches as if he had intended to turn, in course of time, a professor in that line, himself.

The recommendations of Mr. Sifver, as well as his own tall and handsome person, together with his agreeable manners, procured him the *entrée* to several houses, where he was engaged

as language and music master ; as these hours, however, did not thoroughly fill up the number which he felt it necessary to devote to teaching, in order to make some slight profit by his labors, he found himself compelled to negotiate with his pride, which would gladly have rebelled, and therefore soothing it to silent consent, he put on his black scanty frock to go and wait upon the principal families in the town, and offer his services. Oh, this was, and Mannerstedt felt it, the weariest walk he ever took in his life.

He commenced with the first civic personage in the town, the Burgomaster B——, who unfortunately had a party at his house this same evening. When our candidate modestly ascended the steps, and asked a chamber-maid who met him for the Burgomaster, the girl either believed that he was an invited guest, or was wicked enough to wish to embarrass the poor musician, as he was occasionally mockingly denominated, for she merely replied—

"In there," pointing to the hall door.

As the guests had assembled in an apartment beyond the hall, nobody heard Mannerstedt's knock ; and, after some hesitation, he ventured to enter ; there was not a living soul in the hall, with the exception of a couple of little girls of five and six years, who were standing there, and gazing with longing eyes upon some artificial fruit, wishing, no doubt, that they were fit to eat. At the noise occasioned by Frank's entrance, the little fair-haired angels turned round, and thoroughly unacquainted with the proprieties, ran up to him with friendly greetings, as their mama had taught them to receive all visitors, and then offered to conduct him to the room where the party was assembled.

"Come along—come with us," said the little rogues.

Mannerstedt, who heard voices in the adjoining room, would have retired ; but the little Eve's daughters' entreaties were so coax-

ing, that he should go with them to papa and mama, who would be angry else, and think that Bertha and Hilda had been rude, since the strange gentleman had gone away, that he could not resist these little innocent beings who whispered hope and comfort to his heart; and for some moments he fancied that he might probably meet with a kind reception in this house, and therefore followed the children. They, however, caught each a hand, and tripped beside him through the hall like a couple of fairies; they threw open the lightly closed folding doors, leading to the drawing-room; and he stood at once in the midst of a considerable assemblage of gentlemen and ladies; the little ones would have induced him to proceed, but he quickly released himself from their grasp, and bowing deeply, stood there with a burning flush upon his cheeks, at finding himself an unintentional intruder.

The Burgomistress quickly beckoned the children to her side, and whispered something

in their ears, to which one of the little maidens replied—

“But, mamma, you told us we were to do so to every one.”

Mamma shook her head with an air of vexation, and whispered to her neighbour—

“Oh, how simple children are; it really does need more than human patience not to be perfectly ill with their mistakes. My dear Madame M——, who is the man, for Heaven’s sake?”

Meanwhile, the Burgomaster, a round little man, with a most respectable corporation, and a periwig to match, had approached our hero, who, hat in hand, was standing a few paces distant from the door, and awaiting the pleasure of the city magnate, who, with his glass at his eyes, slowly advanced.

“Who are you, my friend?” asked the Burgomaster, who knew very well who he was, “and what is your business?”

Mannerstedt’s heart beat so violently with

strong emotion that he almost felt as if his bosom would burst, and his cheeks and forehead were scarlet, as he replied—

“My name is Frank Mannerstedt, as my pass shews, which I had the honour to deliver on my arrival in town; my business is to enquire if the Burgomaster required a teacher in music, languages, or drawing, for his children.”

“Aye, indeed—yes, yes, Mr. Mannerstedt, so it is—so it is. I recollect now,” said the little great man, signing to a servant to place a chair for the stranger, which, however, the latter civilly declined. To stand at the door as a petitioner might perhaps pass—many a one had stood there in the same position before him, and millions would probably experience the same humiliation after him; but to sit there, that was indeed too much; and, with a short, proud, but civil bow, Mannerstedt declined the offered chair. Ah, yes,” continued the Burgomaster, carelessly seating himself

near the window, "and so that is your business. Well—the time is not exactly suited for entering into arrangements of the kind ; but you can come to-morrow, at precisely half-past one, I shall then have a leisure hour before dinner."

Mannerstedt bowed in silence, and left the room.

What were the feelings which, as he returned homewards to his garret, raged within him ! Oh, who can venture to fathom the human heart—that wonderful thing—at once so great and so little, so moderate, and yet so out of all measure insatiable. Mannerstedt had actually but one, and one in his peculiar situation, pardonable failing ; he was extremely proud—he resisted this feeling as much as he could ; but it would not be overcome, and this evening in particular, as he sat alone—so entirely alone—his arms folded across his breast, and his eyes fixed thoughtfully and darkly on the floor, absorbed in the deep feel-

ing of his forlorn position ; this pride spoke up loudly within, and incessantly placed before his mental eye the scene with the Burgomaster, and the judgments which would be formed regarding it.

“I will not go to-morrow—no, I will go there again no more,” said pride, who always leads the debate on these occasions. “But,” objected reason, “if you thus allow yourself to be affronted and hurt by every little cross, by every little waspish sting, you will never accomplish your end. The poor man who has to seek his living from others, must and should banish all symptoms of feelings such as those which agitate you now ; he must learn the first and most difficult of all lessons—how to control himself ; the path is thorny and rough—and should your labour never meet its reward until you are removed to that realm beyond the stars ; yet the pure, well regulated heart will rejoice over every thistle which has been rooted up, and no longer stifles the better

seed, though the eye may weep as it contemplates the number which yet are standing; that man has learned much who understands how to separate the profitable plants from the noxious weeds, and is no longer discouraged by the toil which it may cost him to root the latter out. Were the path to the temple of perfection strewed with roses, what great merit would he have who strove for the garland suspended upon its pinnacle; astonished and discouraged, the common herd gazes hopelessly aloft, the nobler spirit alone bravely grasps the magnifying glass of hope, which brings the object of our wishes nearer to our eyes, and energy of soul marks every step that brings him nearer to the cherished aim; and should he even never reach that height, yet has his struggle been worthy of esteem, whilst the coward laggard, who has lingered fearfully on the lowest step, but awakens our contempt."

Such arguments did Mannerstedt hold in his mind as with frequent pauses, he willed the

victory over himself, and gained it too; and, on the following morning, the agreement was concluded with the Burgomaster; he thereby gained two points—first, a by no means insignificant increase to his small funds, and secondly, a daily opportunity of exercising himself in self-control.

Mannerstedt's second visit was to the Commercial Counsellor Widen—we have already been made acquainted with its issue.

In this house also would many an hour have been full of bitterness had not Rosa's gracious smile and friendly bearing, in which there was always something so kind, delicate, and feeling, sweetened, and made them the happiest of his life, particularly since the occurrence of which we have read in Rosa's diary.

However, Mannerstedt was far from surmising that he himself had been the occasion of the above mishap, he was far too modest for that, and would have regarded it as the

greatest absurdity had such an idea entered his head. Meanwhile he could not help confessing to himself that if he might have been permitted to wish for 'the Impossible,' he would assuredly have striven with every energy of his soul for the fairest prize he knew of : namely, Rosa's heart ; however, he smiled compassionately at his own silly rhapsodies, and he succeeded in gaining a victory over them also ; only sometimes, in the lonely, long twilight hours, the tempter would again beset him ; and then he had the privilege of speaking a few words daily to her, whom, in his secret soul, he adored ; for often, nearly always indeed, she sat with her work in the room where the lessons were given, either the boys and their violins, or the little sisters and their French. Mannerstedt usually remained a short time after the hour had expired, and ventured, as he now sat opposite to her, or stood leaning on the stove, to clothe the rich poetical images which dwelt in his heart, and the sub-

jects of which lay neither within the circles of nature or of art, in a visible and tangible form, and after such moments which lightened up his heaven, like shooting stars, there were hours when even in his dark, lonely garret he would sit in meditation and was happy. The sorrow which weighed the heaviest upon him, was his mother's weakly health, and her circumstances which became worse every year, for she was now able to do little or nothing in the way of work, and was often compelled to accept the mite which Frank remitted to her with the most affecting assurances that he could well spare it—how well our reader already knows; and this was the principal reason why he could not save the means to procure himself a new black suit; however he had got a new frock, which was indispensable in his visits at great houses, and with this and his pretty modern cap, which became him so well, he really was so attractive that no woman whom he met in the street, or whom he bowed

to at a window, could help giving him a smiling return.

Every Saturday, when he received the money for his lessons, he put by a certain little sum in his savings' bank, which, as we have mentioned before, was to furnish his expenses for the spring term; the rest was allotted to his maintenance and other little expenses, as well as to lighten his dear mother's difficulties.

Such was the position of things at the time when we met Frank at the grand ball at Mr. Widen's; that very morning he had learned the intention of it, and deeply in his soul did he feel that the veil of darkness had now fallen over the last bright point in his horizon, which had, often hitherto, after the toils and bitterness of the day, solaced his solitary evening hour, and allowed him to picture to himself, in pleasing dreams of rosy hue, that the future might, perhaps, some day afford him a rich harvest after all his present struggles. Now

this blessed thought was gone ; well it must inevitably have come to an end sooner or later, that Mannerstedt most clearly felt amidst all his brightest dreams ; and now the blow had fallen, and he bore it with all the strength and firmness which he had always manifested, and to test this still further and avoid all questions he accepted this invitation, and returned at night, the shaft still deeper in his heart, to his home, where he poured forth the anguish of his soul in harmonious sounds, which he produced from his own true and only remaining friend—his violin.

CHAPTER VI.

A MORNING VISIT FROM THE CAPTAIN. A
LESSON AND A CONSULTATION IN MAMA'S BOU-
DOIR.

SOME days after the ball, on occasion of her betrothal, Rosa was one forenoon sitting at a window in the drawing-room, working a collar, Captain Ling was standing in an attitude of careless grace beside her, and amusing himself by twisting a piece of silken thread, which he had abstracted from her work-box, round his finger, for the apparent pleasure of untwisting it again, whilst he watched his silent, industrious

bride, whose eyes never left her work, except every five minutes or so to cast a transient glance at the clock. The captain did not feel altogether sure whether this was intended as a hint for him to bring his visit to a close or no, but as it had not yet struck twelve, and it wanted some hours to dinner time, when he was to meet a party of agreeable friends outside the town, he re-seated himself quite coolly and composedly, with the sapient remark that the day was very fine and healthy for the season.

“Yes, for December, it is very clear and bright, and so much the better for me,” rejoined Rosa, shewing him her work, which was destined for a christmas present for her mother.

“Well then,” continued the Captain, “as the weather pleases you so much we might enjoy an airing, either on foot or in the sledge, as you may prefer.”

“No, thank you, my dear Ferdinand. My

head aches so, I will not go out to-day, and besides too I have no time."

"The flowers there," suggested the captain with a glance at the work, "will bloom all the brighter afterwards; and if you are not feeling quite well, so much the more reason why you should go out and breathe the fresh air a little; let me persuade you, dear Rosa; it would give me infinite pleasure to be allowed to shew myself, for the first time, in public, with my beautiful bride."

"It is a pleasure which you will so often enjoy in future," rejoined Rosa, smiling, "that it really is not worth making so much fuss about. But pray forgive me, dear Ferdinand, if I persist in refusing, I am really not the least in a humour for walking to-day."

"So I perceive," observed the captain, rising, and in a tone of evident pique, he walked thoughtfully a few turns through the room. Rosa sat still while her little, white fingers flew over her work with quite

desperate industry, and her looks continually wandered to the hand of the clock, and her colour heightened as it approached noon. The captain noticed a slight uneasiness in Rosa's movements, and convinced that she wanted to get rid of him, he resolved to stay where he was in spite of her, and, therefore, threw himself comfortably into a sofa nook, as if he fully intended to go to sleep.

Immediately afterwards, the sons of the Counsellor, a couple of lively boys came rushing in, one of them carried a music-stand, the other a quantity of music and the violins.

"Aha, you monkeys," said Ferdinand, with a smile, "so you are going to try our ears for us, eh? as far as I can see, that appears to be your intention."

"If the captain is not inclined to listen, he is at liberty to go away," saucily replied the elder of the young gentlemen, a lad full of boyish mischief.

"Aye, indeed! you are a nice, polite boy,"

said the captain. "I should just like to give you certain little lessons daily, substituting this little plaything for the fiddlestick."

And he tossed his walking cane into the air, and caught it as it fell. The boy colored up, and was on the point of making a rather more saucy reply than the first; but a severe and serious look from Rosa, who was more beloved by the youngsters than even mama herself, made him hold his tongue; he, therefore, silently arranged the music, and Captain Ferdinand continued—

"If you, Rosa, can listen to their concert, I suppose I can manage to endure it too."

"As to me," said Rosa, with a smile, "I assure you, I bear it with great pleasure. I have watched the boys' progress from the commencement; and as they both have a taste for music, good ears, and a clever master, the time has long gone by, when listening could be a penance even to a correct musical ear."

Rosa spoke without the least shade of em-

barrassment ; she certainly could have wished, heartily wished, that the captain would have taken himself off before Mannerstedt's arrival ; many motives gave rise to such a wish, and made it natural enough ; but, as she observed, that Ferdinand was in no way inclined to share in it, but, on the contrary, seemed determined to remain far beyond his usual time, she was happy enough to allow no sign of discontent to be apparent when she saw her hopes destroyed.

"That young student, who waltzed with you on the evening of our betrothal, is their Apollo, is he not ?" asked Captain Ling.

"Yes, Candidate Mannerstedt," replied she, in the most indifferent tone in the world.

"A very pretty fellow he is too," observed Ling ; "good appearance—a figure and bearing which would do honor to a soldier ; but a poor devil, probably, to judge from his toilette. I really felt sorry for the poor lad ; it was a con-

founded pity that, with such a good figure, he had not a bet—”

“Be quiet, Ferdinand,” whispered Rosa, interrupting him, as she passed her handkerchief over her glowing cheeks.

The door, at the lower end of the apartment, was opened, and Frank Mannerstedt, in his new, fashionable paletot, entered, cap in hand, and made his bow. Rosa got up, and courteously returned his greeting, and the captain, half reclining on his sofa, made a careless, but, at the same time, good-natured bend; and the boys scraped away, and stood bolt upright, ready to begin. When Mannerstedt had laid aside his cap, and remarked the captain's salute with a slight contraction of his eye-brows, he turned partly to the music stand, and faced the boys, so as to turn his back upon the captain; his position, however, did not prevent Rosa from observing the dark shade upon his handsome, manly features, and

that he was somewhat paler than usual, which, after the crimson flush which anger or some other feeling had called up in his cheeks had passed away, was more than commonly striking.

The lesson had commenced. The captain, seldom accustomed to put any restraint upon himself, except when obliged to do so, continued to address all sorts of trifling remarks to Rosa; however, her answers were very short; and she appeared so much taken up with the piece which her little brothers were playing, that Ferdinand soon grew tired, and could not conceive how Rosa, whose talents and taste were so cultivated, could find any interest in such tedious work; however, as so it was, the captain resolved to allow her to enjoy the beauties of harmony in the boys' performance undisturbed; and he therefore arose, took his hat, and whispered—

“Rosa, good bye, my angel—I really can-

not stand this any longer—I shall see you again in the evening.”

He then took his departure, thinking as he went—

“Rosa really has a most inconceivable weakness for rude boys.”

When the captain had softly closed the door behind him, Rosa felt as if a weight had fallen from her heart—she breathed more freely—for she felt, and ventured to own it to herself, that nothing could be more disagreeable than, at these, the only really happy moments she ever enjoyed, having the captain as a fifth person in the party. She could not help feeling that he was not only superfluous, but intrusive, for the careless freedom in his manners, now and then assumed a character which caused Mannerstedt to feel hurt in more ways than one.

Our heroine was not the least of an enthusiast—but she was a thoroughly good, kind,

sensible girl; and she accommodated herself without making any useless complaints to the necessity of allowing matters to take their course, and never even dreamed of the possibility of any little tragedy or comedy either with the young music-master; no over-refined sense of duty in the shape of self-reproach ever rose to deprive her of the pure and simple pleasure which these few hours gave her—and she felt that for so short a time she could enjoy them without a blush.

The hour was at an end, and Mannerstedt took his cap from the table where he had placed it, without turning round, for he believed that Captain Ling was still there, and therefore stopped short half way in the stiff, formal bow he was upon the point of making, as he chanced to look up and saw the sofa vacant; a hasty glance through the room assured him that the rival—whom he certainly did not love—had departed; but his looks fell hurriedly to the ground again; and, as he

stood there, in some embarrassment, turning his cap about in his hands, the boys carried away the music-stand and all the other things which had been employed in the lesson. After they had closed the door, Mannerstedt still stood there, in the same posture, in the middle of the room, irresolute whether he should go or remain a few minutes as usual.

Rosa also felt that she had never been so little open and at her ease in Mannerstedt's company before ; and there was a slight degree of constraint in the tone in which she asked—

“Is Mr. Mannerstedt in such haste, to-day?”

“Not more so than usual,” he replied, as he drew nearer, “I was merely afraid of being troublesome.”

“Oh, not the least, I assure you,” smiled Rosa, completely herself again. “Mr. Mannerstedt is always a welcome guest here.”

The candidate put down his cap again, and took a seat at a short distance from the young

lady, a pause now ensued, which awakened no agreeable sensations in either, and convinced Rosa that it was no longer, and could not again be as it had been; however, this must be as little suffered to become apparent as possible; and she soon succeeded in restoring an easy tone to the conversation.

"Have you had no letter lately from your good mother? Mr. Mannerstedt," asked Rosa, well knowing that this was a subject which would soon make Frank talk.

"Alas no, Miss Widen," said the afflicted son, with a sigh, "it has been a great source of uneasiness to me, that I have been so much longer than usual without news. I dread, and not without reason, that things are very bad, or else the tenderest and best of mothers would certainly not leave me so long without those dear and much wished for accounts of her which constitute almost my only enjoyment."

"Do not so soon give up hope," begged Rosa, in a kind and gentle tone, "who knows

what may have prevented her writing? If it is possible she will, of course, be anxious that her letters should reach you by Christmas—we have only ten days now to wait for that, and then you will be sure to hear.”

“May God grant that your prophecy may prove correct, for what ever accounts I may have to expect, they would be far better than this tormenting uncertainty,” said Mannerstedt, thanking Rosa warmly with his looks, for her friendly effort to administer consolation to a poor solitary and friendless young man.

At this moment in swept her mother, in a rustling silk gown, and a hat gay with flowers, enough to stock half a stall.

“Rosa, my child, are you still sitting there? No, now, upon my word you will work till you are ill. I have had such a heavenly walk, and paid several visits too. Good morning, Mr. Mannerstedt, you must come this evening and give me your assistance in a little business—come at half-past five—I have some-

thing in my head which I must consult with you about."

Mannerstedt bowed courteously, and took his cap, for he knew that this was a civil signal of dismissal, as the lady did not seat herself. Just as he got to the door, Madame Widen called after him.

"Mr. Mannerstedt, Mr. Candidate, pray remember that you are to dine with us on Christmas eve; but now pray excuse me, for I am very busy. Good morning—good morning."

Mannerstedt bowed once more, and hastened down the steps; and now Mrs. Widen took her daughter's arm and hurried her away as quickly as possible into the maternal sanctum—a little cabinet which but few were allowed to enter, and those few only on important occasions, *c'est à dire*, on such occasions as the good lady herself deemed so. As soon as they had entered the room, and madame had carefully closed the

door and looked narrowly around lest any undesired listener might be in ambush anywhere, she seated herself upon the sofa, and bade Rosa take a tabouret beside her.

“Now listen to me, Rosa, my dear good sensible girl,” began her mother, in a low and somewhat hesitating tone. “I know that you can be sharp-sighted enough when you like, and with God’s blessing I shall not have lavished so much care and anxiety upon your education for nothing, and ——,” but here she abruptly stopped, twisted her French glove about most industriously, and considered how to get out the rest of the speech which she had commenced.

Extremely surprised at this singular and somewhat unexpected beginning, Rosa steadfastly regarded her mother’s somewhat wandering eyes, and profited by the pause to enquire—

“In what especial particular does my dear

mother wish me to shew my acuteness? If it is any thing about the Christmas presents, I believe I have thought about them already."

"Oh, no, no, my dear, nothing to do with such trifles," replied Madame Widen, impatiently swinging about her glove.

Well then, dear mama, what is it?"

"Yes, now just look, my dear Rosa," continued her mother, "to explain matters so that you may clearly comprehend them requires more wit than —— but that is all one, I will try, and so listen to what I am going to say. You know that your father is rich, or at least well to do, but as mercantile affairs are not always equally flourishing or equally profitable—it sometimes happens that—that—they go a little wrong. We women, my dear child, do not understand much about business—what I mean to say is—that as times are—a merchant must continually have his whole property out on speculation to keep up his credit, and something of the kind is the case at present, (of

course, dear child, this is in strict confidence,) with your father. Now, in consequence of this circumstance, your portion will unluckily not be so large as was intended. The Professor, on the other hand, Rosa dear, is a very rich man, but avaricious, almost horribly miserly—and so I have been thinking, you see, that as at any rate we cannot calculate upon his assistance without some exertion on our parts, that you, dear Rosa, to speak out and without circumlocution, may be able to conduce to this end, by making yourself agreeable to him—with your attractive and irresistible little ways—that is when you like it—it will be easy for you to gain the old man's heart. Visit him, my love—flatter him a little—delicately, of course, and endeavour to put the thought in his head, that he leaves himself too dependent upon strangers' hands for the care of his precious person in his old days, and that it would be such a pleasure and happiness to you if he would allow you to devote your attentions

to him, and, moreover, that nothing could possibly make you so happy as that he should make up his mind to take up his future abode with his children, Ferdinand and yourself ; and that you would both of you vie with each other in shewing him the greatest attention and solicitude, and all that, you know. and as much more as you like, or find opportunity for, in the course of your visit. And that the visit and its object may appear more natural, you must give him, from your father and myself, a cordial invitation to spend Christmas Eve in our family circle, which will so soon be his own also."

Rosa's ideas began to get confused ; this little communication of her mother's was most repugnant to her feelings, more especially because her own dear mother should have expressed a wish, and given her advice, from which her own rectitude of feeling and delicacy recoiled ; as to the slight and artful allusion to her father's affairs, Rosa guessed that this was

merely a kind of decoy, of which her mother had availed herself, to gain her daughter's acquiescence in her wishes—for Rosa esteemed it thoroughly impossible that both he and her mother would shew themselves so utterly unconcerned, if there had been any real cause for anxiety; she could not recollect having observed one single furrow on her father's forehead, or one single ominous expression in his eyes; she might have thought and judged otherwise had she seen him as he sat before the desk in his counting-house, reckoning and meditating, and, at times, murmuring low curses, as he paused in his work. If she had followed him to his own chamber, and had listened to his weary and never ending wanderings to and fro, and had seen the look of fury with which he kicked at an unfortunate dog who came across him in one of these unguarded moments; and had she remarked, too, how his words forcibly expelled, as it were, from his inmost soul, issued from his closely compressed

lips—dark, bitter, evil words, which none save himself understood, and in the utterance of which, the anxious drops fell heavily from his brow; and had she seen, besides, the extraordinary change in his countenance as dinner-time and the hour of meeting with his family approached, how the brow grew smooth; the eye smiling, almost careless, the bearing proud as usual, and his gait firm and assured; as if he had never even heard of failure in business, or possible bankruptcy—then, indeed, Rosa would have regarded her mother's words in another sense; now, however, they passed lightly by, and her attention was exclusively occupied with her proposal to entrap the Professor, for she felt assured that if she refused to listen to it, her mother would make the attempt herself—an idea which Rosa's delicacy recoiled at; and she, therefore, resolved to appear not disinclined to do as her mother wished.

“Why, Rosa, my dear Rosa,” said her

mother, interrupting the somewhat lengthened silence, "what are you thinking of? do not sit there as mute as a statue; but answer me, for heaven's sake. Do you believe that you have the necessary degree of tact to manage this? you'll not do it by dreaming about it, I can tell you; and so speak your thoughts. If you will not entertain the project of your own affectionate mother, and all for your own benefit too, only say so,—and—I can do it myself; for I can see that it goes against you."

"Oh, no, indeed, my dear mother," replied Rosa, quickly, "not exactly against me—at least, not the visit to the Professor. I will pay that with pleasure, and make myself as agreeable as I can; but to propose to him, in so many words, that he should leave his old favourite apartment, which, as Ferdinand tells me, he has already occupied for more than twenty years, that, I do not think, would exactly do—at least, not at a first visit," added she, as she marked her mother's brow grow

dark—this little excusable bit of craft had the best possible effect on her lady mother's humour.

"You are a real, good, amiable, dear child," said she, somewhat relieved, "a brave, sensible girl, who is always mindful of, and grateful for, the care and anxiety of her fond mother; and so I leave the whole affair in your hands, with confidence, and am sure that you will quickly do all that is necessary to forward matters as we wish. When will you go and see the Professor, my child?"

"Some few days before Christmas Eve," replied Rosa, "we must not be over hasty."

"Well, well, as you please—so be it; have you thought about a Christmas present for the old gentleman yet?"

"Oh yes, dear mamma," rejoined Rosa, gaily, rejoiced to be quit of the painful subject, "I am working a pair of slippers for the good Professor."

"Slippers, my dear child?" said her mother,

with a pleasant laugh, "you had better give them to your future husband; slipper tactics are not to be entirely despised, I can tell you—I'll give you a few lessons on that subject some day soon."

"Oh—no, no, dear mamma," said Rosa, laughing, "I hope to be able to do without them."

"Aha, do not be too sure of that—at least, do not rely upon it," added her mother, who had now got into a most brilliant humour, "but what have you for your future husband, if one may ask?"

"It is not exactly anything for himself," rejoined Rosa, "but something, at any rate, that he has often wished to have—a net for his pretty horse, and I really believe that it will turn out quite splendid; the little maidens are helping me out with it several hours daily."

"Not so bad," observed her mother, with a peculiar smile, "apropos, do you know what

I am going to give him?—you will hardly guess.”

“No indeed—I willingly give it up. What, mamma can have thought of, I confess I am very curious to know.”

“Now, my little Rosa,” burst out the lady, with a not particularly refined laugh, “as you have thought of the net, I have been obliged to consider the horse; however, joking apart, that is not so very pleasant; I learned this morning, during one of my visits, and quite in confidence, that the poor Captain has pledged his horse to the rich old dyer, Brenner, for—what think you, my dear child? In order to raise the miserable sum for those trifles, which he made you a present of on your betrothal-day—that sort of thing will never do—and so I intend to release the horse, and send it back to him on Christmas Eve—before he comes here, of course—for those are Christmas presents that people can’t lay up in lavender.”

“Good heavens! poor Ferdinand, how sorry

I am for him," sighed Rosa, "that he should have got into such embarrassments by his heedlessness. Oh, had he only treated me with confidence—had he only let me know the true condition of his empty treasury, how much more should I have valued such candor than all his presents, which I now cannot even look at without pain. Oh, my good mama, I am really very, very sorry that Ferdinand did not give me credit for so much feeling as to choose the former plan."

"Ah, my dear Rosa," replied her more shrewd mother, "now you are really absurd; how can you ever think of such a thing? do you suppose that he could have come, upon his betrothal day, to his bride, like a school-boy, and have confessed that he was as poor as a church mouse, and incapable even of offering her the usual bridal presents? No, my love, we really could not expect that. It would be a good thing indeed if we women could always command an account of things

when we have the right to claim it; but, before hand, it is utterly out of the question."

Rosa found that her mother, in this respect, understood her just as little as Ferdinand had done, and therefore replied in a conciliating tone.

"It is very possible, dearest mama, that this might be too much to desire, though many disagreeables might be avoided thereby. But how will you be able to manage this business? it is indeed not very easy to find a suitable method. Could not papa arrange it all best?"

"By no means," said her mother, "he must not know a syllable of it, as it would never answer for us to appear to meddle in the poor Captain's affairs; and yet it would be a sin and a shame, if I, his future mother-in-law, knowing his embarrassing position, were not to help him—and, besides, I have some spare pocket money, which I cannot employ better, than in saving his honor, and his horse, at the

same time—our modest little Candidate shall manage all that for me. I begged him to come here this evening. As soon as I have given him his instructions, he shall go to old Brenner, and hear from him what sum he has lent Ferdinand upon his horse, and beg him to be silent about the whole affair.”

Rosa, at these words, changed color, and various feelings contended in her heart for the mastery; true, she felt assured that it would be impossible to find a more fitting person for this ticklish affair; but then it was most unpleasant to ask such a favor from Mannerstedt, and one too which would necessarily shew him the Captain's affairs, in a point of view, the explanation of which would be both distressing to Rosa, and insulting to the Captain, should he afterwards become aware who had negotiated the business.

“My dear mama,” answered Rosa, in a tone of persuasion, “I fear—yes, I really do fear—that this cannot be so easily done. In my

opinion, Mannerstedt will not be at all a proper person—indeed—”

“But in mine, my love,” interrupted her mother, decidedly, “he is exactly the person—he is such a very civil and obliging young man, this Mannerstedt, one of my very great favorites ; and I should like to know, too, why he is unfit for it.”

“Assuredly, my dear mama, he is quite fit for it—no question about that—and I have no sort of doubt that he has quite sufficient nobility of feeling and discretion to be quite worthy of such confidence ; but I think we ought not to mix up any stranger in the matter. If mama will allow me till to-morrow morning to think of some other way—only promise me not to speak a word about it to Mannerstedt this evening when he comes.”

“I really do not know, my dear girl,” replied her mother, with an expression in her voice, something between yielding and the difficulty of giving up her ideas of her own

infallibility. "I do not know whether you are right in this." And in reality it did a little vex the good lady, that Rosa should oppose her in a point where she had expected her to break out into both admiration and eulogy of her mother's magnanimity. "I do not myself see any want of delicacy in my plan; and Mannerstedt will understand perfectly how to manage the affair cleverly."

"My dear, good mama," begged Rosa, caressingly, and pressing her mother's hand to her lips, "please, please, do let the matter rest, as I have entreated you. If I cannot devise any plan by to-morrow morning, which appears to us more reconcileable with the delicacy which Ferdinand has a right to expect from us, if the service we wish to do him is to be really and truly such, then we will take Mannerstedt into council, but not this evening, for we must consider it over better first."

As Rosa entreated so humbly, her mother felt excessively touched, and only asked—

"Well then, my dear child, what will you have me say to Mannerstedt when he comes, since your little self-will has completely over-set my capital plan."

"Ah, my dear mother," returned Rosa, happy and relieved. "It will be no very difficult matter to your sagacity to find some other pretence for the invitation; looking after the Christmas presents for the boys, would be quite sufficient—Mannerstedt is a great friend of the children, and is always glad to assist in such arrangements; but now, mama dear, allow me to go to my own room, and work at my net for an hour before dinner—we have not many days to spare—I must be diligent, or I shall not be ready."

"So, my darling," said her mother, kissing her daughter on the forehead, "your mother's sagacity," she added, with a self-satisfied smile, "must, as usual, make things right. Well then, I will consider how I can manage to get rid of our modest candidate."

Her mind made easy by this promise, Rosa hurried off to her room, and whilst her fingers were rapidly flying over her work, she was turning over a multitude of various plans in her head, to arrive at the same end as her mother in a different way. He ought never to know, or even to suspect, that this aid came from their house—upon that point Rosa was quite satisfied; but then the puzzle was how was it to be done; and, in the midst of this irresolution, all at once, an idea arose in her mind — whether the Professor — perhaps whether she might not venture to place the whole matter, as simply and in as favourable a light as possible, before the old man, and ask his advice, or give him the money, to make all right again. It was quite an article of faith with her, that no one would be likely to keep a secret better than Professor Ling. Rosa thought about the old gentleman all day — how she finally made up her mind, we shall discover by-and-bye.

CHAPTER VII.

A VISIT TO MRS. BORGENSKÖLD'S.

ON the evening of the same day, the morning occurrences of which, at Mr. Widen's house, we have related, Mrs. Borgensköld, an elderly and venerable matron of a kindly and benevolent exterior, was seated in a corner of her little sofa, busied in mending the nine-and-ninetieth rent in her shawl, which had been her true friend and companion since her youthful days; her daughter Hilda was at a table by the window, and writing as industriously as a Secretary of State. The apartment was simple, but clean

and orderly, though the whole picture betrayed very, very narrow means.

After the two ladies had continued their occupations for some time in silence, Hilda arose, the deepening twilight made it impossible for her to continue her writing. She walked up and down the room several times, whilst her mother cast a stolen glance at her every now and then, and secretly wiped away a falling tear with the end of the dear old shawl.

Hilda Borgensköld was a remarkably handsome girl, and, in addition to this, she had a good heart, a clear head, and a cultivated understanding; but also a certain not inconsiderable degree of pride in the advantages which nature had bestowed upon her, and which were of more worth in her estimation than those of fortune, which she had rather a contempt for, when unaccompanied by the former—beauty, however, excepted—for she had too much real elevation of feeling to make

this capricious freak of nature a main point of consideration. For some years past, she had accustomed herself both to love and respect her cousin Ferdinand; since she knew that she had a heart, she had been sensible of his affection; and though he had never formally sought her hand, she had always, though she hardly knew why, regarded him as the person who was to promote her future happiness—for, a thousand times over, he had solemnly assured her, that there could be no happiness for him on earth in which she was not to be a sharer.

Hilda believed him, and gave him credit in her heart for the delicacy with which he avoided earnestly seeking from her a promise of constancy before he could make her an offer to share his fate by a matrimonial union.

The report which spoke of his love for and addresses to Rosa Widen she despised as utterly without foundation, and not worth wasting a thought upon; ought not she to

know him better than that ? no question about it.

However, what are all our hopes, even those which have become firmly rooted in our hearts ? are they secure against the storms of fate ? Oh no ! they are scattered and dispersed like a handful of dust, and the mere thorn of memory, is left behind, until hope throws out new buds, which again, in their turn, blossom—wither—and die. Soon, too soon, came the moment when Ferdinand, embarrassed and confused stammered out something about the necessity of giving up the hope of possessing her, as it had become impossible for him to see this long cherished hope realised, because — because urgent circumstances, which he could not name, and insuperable difficulties had arisen to prevent it.

Hilda heard him out with admirable fortitude ; her pride, struggling against the wounded feelings of her heart, enabled her to appear

composed, cold, and determined, and she gravely but politely wished him happiness in the engagement which he had contracted ; now, however, the power of self-control was exhausted, and briefly bidding him farewell, she coldly and proudly left the room, and hurried to her own apartment—here her feelings of sorrow asserted their right, at seeing herself thus slighted and shamefully deceived by the man in whom she had bound up all her hopes of earthly happiness.

Full of bitterness was this hour which so cruelly destroyed all the sweet dreams of her young and joyous heart ; as soon, however, as she began to regard the matter in a calmer light, she felt herself at once seized with a profound contempt for the weakness and inconstancy of Ferdinand, whose ignoble selfishness had led him to seek, merely for her riches, a woman for his wife whom he did not love.

These considerations shewed her former lover in a light totally divested of the magical

brightness which had surrounded his image in by-gone days, and he appeared before her in his own simple, natural class, as a man of quite common-place, every-day stamp — one of those, namely, who it is true can love to a certain extent, and feel happy if their love meets with no obstacles, but can quite coolly accommodate themselves either to desert from or renew their attentions to the beloved object, according to relative outward position and circumstances, and if these circumstances should demand renunciation, why, in God's name, a man must yield to reason, and cast his hook out in other waters, in which case, of course, he is heartily sorry that the poor object of his former feelings, must necessarily suffer at the turn things have taken ; and at any rate it is a lucky thing that he has not made a decided declaration, for he can yet withdraw with honor.

That this was the turn Ferdinand's thoughts had taken Hilda saw clearly enough ; for a

long term of years he had been as devoted to her as he could possibly be, but at the least obstacle—at the least appearance of being obliged to struggle for his affection—he was ready to sacrifice it; and Ferdinand was, therefore now, in Hilda's opinion, a poor, weak, contemptible being, and such a one could not, after the first painful feelings had passed, be an object of regret to her. After what had taken place, she would not have united her fate to his at any price, even had she received the Professor's whole property as a dowry, and his blessing to boot; but it grieved and wounded her to think that she should have been the object of such a frivolous inclination. Soon, however, reason and reflection gained the victory, and with apparent composure she returned to her usual occupations.

In the meantime Ferdinand, as we have already mentioned, could not reconcile himself to the idea of being scorned by the only woman whom he had ever really loved; and deeply

regretting the errors which had led to his latter steps, had resolved to make a full confession to Hilda, and if she was willing to forgive him, submit himself, rescue or no rescue, to his fate; but Hilda resolutely rejected all explanation, either verbally or in writing; never would she listen to another word of love from his lips, not even from his pen; she would know nothing about it, she would forget and be forgotten. This was what she wished, and she was one of those rare female characters who do not in their love find a thousand excuses to justify their weakness. She had for ever renounced all connection with Ferdinand, and she kept her word; no time, or circumstances or relations were capable of shaking her resolve, or altering her way of thinking.

Where her thoughts were lingering, as she slowly paced the room in the deepening twilight with her hands crossed upon her bosom, we cannot tell; we, however, presume that

Ferdinand had no share therein, for she walked quickly up to the sofa, threw her arms about her beloved mother's neck, and said, in the most joyous tone—

“That will do, we shall decidedly get our travelling expenses and something over. I can see beforehand how very glad papa will be, and I will gladly work by day to manage the household matters, and write mornings and evenings.”

“And destroy yourself,” interrupted Mrs. Borgensköld, “in order to support your poor parents, and help them out of their troubles Ah, my own dear Hilda, it grieves me much that I must see your youth pass away so joylessly.”

“Do not talk so, my dear mother,” besought Hilda, slightly vexed. “What enjoyments have I to regret? Do I not already have more than our income justifies, and you may believe me, mama, how far from a sacrifice it is to me busying myself about our travelling

expenses ; indeed it gives me unspeakable delight to be able to do it, for my heart longs for some other place of abode—in the country I mean.”

She quickly added,

“ It would kill me to be obliged to be smothered in town during another summer, and I can never feel sufficiently grateful for the unexpected source of earnings which my knowledge of French has opened to us. I have calculated that by means of the translation of these two works we shall be able, not merely to cover the expenses of our journey, but to lay by a small sum besides, in order to purchase a few absolutely necessary articles.”

“ And you feel sure, my poor Hilda, that you can accomplish all this before the end of May ?” asked her mother with an incredulous shake of the head.

“ Decidedly I do, mama,” assured Hilda. “ Towards the middle of May I trust to be able to dispatch it, and by the end of the

month, at farthest, I shall receive the price, and when June has donned its festal garments we will pack up our entire little property, and embark on board Captain R——'s fast sailing sloop, which makes such rapid passages to Halmstadt, and from thence we will travel the ten or twelve remaining miles by land. It is very disagreeable that the dear little place is not nearer to the sea! but we must put up with that, we shall be sure to be there to the day and hour, and I am delighted beforehand when I think of papa's pleasure at seeing us again. Oh, I can fancy to myself so well how he bustles about in all his inspector's dignity, with the work people in the gardens and meadows, and how capitably mama will manage there with the milk and butter, not to forget my little self, springing about with the large bunch of keys from kitchen to larder, and occupying myself with our simple dinner, or rattling away at the loom, with red cheeks and nimble fingers. But the early

mornings and evenings I am to have to myself, they are to be dedicated to my literary employments, for that source must by no means be neglected. By that I intend to get the means of rivalling the toilette of the neighbours' lasses, and ravishing the hearts of the curate—the lawyer and—no, the commissary, that is if he is a bachelor, not forgetting the tax-gatherer, when I go to church, for you see in the country we must not be too particular, but content ourselves with such conquests as are to be had. Oh, mama, mama, you shall see how capital it will all be."

"But maiden! what in heaven's name has come to ye? I never saw you so full of spirits," cried Mrs. Bergensköld, who could not help smiling at Hilda's gaiety, "all these fine prospects, in my, opinion are not exactly deserving of being painted in such bright and happy colors."

"And just exactly because my own dear mama will take such a gloomy, cheerless view

of them," answered Hilda, in an altered tone, full of calm earnestness. "I will, that is to say as far as I can, endeavour to draw pleasant, laughing pictures of things, and if our good God vouchsafes a blessing upon my efforts, I hope all will go well."

"I would I had somewhat of your light and happy spirit, my child," sighed Mrs. Borgensköld, "aye, much, much I wish it, but the Professor's harshness is ever in my mind; he could have helped your father but ——"

"But, dear mama," said Hilda, finishing the broken sentence, "my uncle had already warned papa that he would ruin himself by engaging in this matter; and at the same time decidedly told him that should he do so, contrary to uncle's advice and knowledge, he must not reckon upon his aid, should things go wrong, as he had expressly pointed out to papa, that it would fail; and I remember very well too that the Professor swore at the same time that if papa would not listen to

his advice, while there was a possibility of rescue, he would not listen to him or the intercession of others for him in future; and how can we then reproach uncle? When papa, far from attending to his advice or warnings, rather chose to believe the persuasions of his false friend, and to become security for him, and so lost his property! And what would have become of us, we should have been totally ruined, if papa had not, by means of the Professor's interest, obtained the inspectorship of the little property of Lindfers, in Smaland? It is not very considerable, God knows, but papa can live upon it, and so can we too, as his letters assure us, if we are willing to limit ourselves, and can only get there. Now we have got the means to do this, and so, dear mama, there is no need to worry ourselves."

"Oh, my dear Hilda, you know not what a weight is on my heart," said her mother, softly, as she wiped away some silently trickling tears, "a heavy burden, child, for I am the

one who has brought all this trouble and sorrow upon your father, from which we both suffer; it was solely on my account that the weary long hostility, that prevails between the brothers, first arose."

"How so, mama, dear?" asked Hilda, seating herself upon a stool at her mother's feet. "Ah, tell me all that troubles you, I would so gladly share and sooth your every sorrow, or at least convince my dear mama, that it is easier to endure when imparted to another."

"Ah, my own good child, you can do nothing here," said her mother with a sad smile, as she stroked back the silken curls from Hilda's forehead, and kissed her; "this sorrow is older than yourself—it is my conviction, my bitter conviction, which has pursued me closely and painfully for many a long year, that your father, through his marriage with me, a poor girl of low station, has been removed from quite another career of life than that which the pressure of circumstances has

compelled him to follow. At the time of which I speak, your father was a young ensign, and the Professor, his half-brother, who is several years his senior, had just retired from public life, and settled down here, in our town of H——, with a considerable property, and here, in accordance with his natural inclination to solitude and study, lived wholly retired, with no other society than that of your father and his little nephew, Ferdinand, whom he had already adopted as a child, on the premature death of his parents. Here your papa became acquainted with me; at that time I worked as a seamstress in great houses, and as he could not bear to see the neglect and bad usage to which I was exposed, he resolved, in the folly and thoughtlessness of youth, to leave the army—marry me—and live upon the little property which he had inherited from his mother. Oh, how weak, how unpardonably childish and selfish I was—for it was all that united—as you may perceive from the fact that

I accepted his offer ; but I loved my Herman so fervently, and imagined that my love would recompense him for every sacrifice, and he had not long to persuade ere I gave my consent to share with him the lot he proffered. The Professor, however, was regularly furious, he tried every imaginable way to turn Herman from his purpose, which, perhaps, too correctly, he termed a piece of folly ; but never were the best reasonings so utterly thrown away. Your father pertinaciously held to his resolution, and the brothers parted in anger. Herman retired with the rank of lieutenant, and purchased that pretty little corner house, which we were afterwards obliged to sell. We settled ourselves in our self constituted paradise, and lived happily in and for ourselves—though not perfectly happily, for I will be candid with you in everything, Herman often sighed in silence, and was many a time tempted to regret his over hasty step, though his noble heart led him to strive to conceal this from me

—but how could he possibly hide it long from the vigilant eyes of an affectionate wife? And so all our domestic happiness was more apparent than real. We lived in continual apprehension of hurting each other's feelings, and were consequently compelled to observe a kind of cautious reserve in all our words, which gave rise to a mutual relation, which was not natural, and could not be happy; besides, we, each of us, felt that we had not acted rightly, and we had to expiate our error by long years of self reproach."

"At your birth, my Hilda, your father, for the first time, since his marriage, visited the Professor, and in the deep emotion which he then felt, urged and entreated him to forget their difference which had lasted a whole year, and to come to his home and bless his child; but the Professor was still inexorable—he refused to stand Godfather, or to have anything to do with us; deeply hurt and humiliated, my Herman returned—he sorrowed in silence.

Meanwhile, however, years slipped away, and his only pleasure and employment was to work in the little bit of ground, which we then possessed in the vicinity of the town—here he lavished his labour, his time, and his money; one day, I remember it now, as if it were yesterday, we had taken our dinner with us, and had gone early to our little, quiet asylum, to enjoy the contemplation of God's fair nature, and delight our eyes with the hopeful promise of an abundant harvest; next to our little piece of ground was a meadow, which belonged to the Professor, and God only knows by what miracle it so happened, that your uncle, who scarcely ever left his home from year's end to year's end, had this very day made his old housekeeper and his servant pack up all the requisites for comfort and enjoyment, and these he had now had brought into the meadow, whither he also proceeded, in company with Ferdinand, then a boy of twelve years old, to enjoy, likewise, a beautiful sum-

mer's day, in the open air ; and, during his absence, madame was to institute a radical cleansing and purifying of the whole house, which, as far as the Professor's own particular apartments were concerned, could only be accomplished at most twice a year. At this period, my little Hilda, you were a little, five-year-old flutterer, springing about gaily and happily from flower to flower, and, in your efforts to catch your little namesakes, had strolled farther and farther from my watchful eyes, and not until I had just prepared the coffee, did I first miss you, and sprang up in the greatest anxiety to look after my darling. At length, when I could find her no where, I ventured to approach the hedge which separated our garden from the Professor's—this latter was surrounded by a thick birch hedge—I looked cautiously through, and was nearly on the point of screaming for joy, as I beheld you sitting upon the Professor's knee, playing with his long, grey hair, as contentedly

as possible, while he sipped his glass of *eau sucrée*, and regarded you with a glance in which I saw an evident expression of benevolent kindness; without a moment's thought, I softly stepped over the low hedge, and went quickly up to you. As soon as the Professor saw me, he arose, put you down upon the grass, and, with a gloomy look, and a half-bow, said—

“ ‘ Pray excuse me, madame—the little girl was curious, like all the daughters of Eve; she had climbed up into the hedge, and, unfortunately, stuck there, when she tried to get down again, and would probably have fallen down and injured herself, had not my nephew been at hand, and lifted her over.’

“ I stood there before this so-much-dreaded personage with down-cast eyes, whilst you flew into my arms, and clasped your little hands about my neck; deeply did I feel in my heart that such a favorable moment would probably never occur again to endeavor to effect a

reconciliation—a soft voice whispered within me—‘try, only try—it will surely succeed.’ And I obeyed—God alone inspired me with such words as prevailed and touched his heart, and my bosom beat high with joyful feeling, as I marked how the icy crust which enclosed his heart appeared gradually to thaw before my entreaties and tears, and he promised me to give his hand to Herman in token of re-established peace and brotherly love.

“Ferdinand was commissioned to seek your father with all possible despatch ; and the hour, my Hilda, in which they once more clasped each other’s hands, and met again as brothers and as friends, was the first of pure, unmingled happiness in my existence. We passed an evening of joy and peace together, and for many a year lived together in unity and affection.

“But now your father fell upon the unlucky idea of engaging in business with Mr. Brocker, and this man succeeded in completely engag-

ing us both in his favor. From the very commencement, the Professor warned us against the connexion, dissuaded us in the most energetic manner from having anything to do with it—and, I must confess, helped your father three or four times when he was in severe distress.

“At length, however, this unhappy security was mentioned. You will remember, yourself, how the Professor then urged your father to endeavor to persuade him to separate himself and his affairs from this man; but you do not know, my child, that it was I, who, in my inconceivable, unpardonable infatuation, and entirely and completely overcome by Brocker’s unlucky eloquence and plausibility, regarding the grand and lucrative speculations, which we were to engage in, persuaded your father almost against his own wish, and his better convictions, to become security—at least, so much is certain, that had I not made so bad a use of the confidence which he always placed

in my advice, he would have followed that of the Professor; and my participation in this affair, makes my grief doubly bitter—though Herman, the noble soul, has never reproached me, even with a single word or look; he knew, knew well, that my burden would be heavy enough in my own self-reproaches, which never left me; and the torturing assurance that I had been a second time the cause of his quarrelling with his brother—for now their friendship is utterly and for ever at an end; and I believe, may God forgive me if I am wrong, that it was more to get rid of the unpleasant sight of your father's emaciated and trouble-worn features, than out of pure benevolence, that he got the inspectorship in Smaland for him."

"Oh! my dear mother, never think it," said Hilda earnestly, "that is wronging him very, very much, and he has not deserved it from us, for he was so friendly and kind previously; but he is a strict man, and

one who never breaks his word ; we have nothing to blame him for, and when we leave H——, I must go and see him for once, and bid him farewell. And meantime, my dear mother," continued Hilda, after a short pause, " we must be fervently thankful to God, that he has granted us one little gleam of hope, of light, and of future peace and comfort, and if you were wrong in persuading papa to take this step, you have suffered deeply for it, as I feel and know ; but it would be wrong to sorrow for it any longer, and waste the energies which we so much require to begin life anew ; mama's presence alone will restore papa to vigor and activity, and he and I will unite our efforts to make mama forget what is past and gone ; and we have weathered the storm, and are now riding at anchor in a happy haven, and may yet be far happier than we have ever been, for we have our mutual affection—our confidence in each other, and our fervent, earnest exertions, to sustain and sweeten our

numerable trifles, which we have, as it were, made a part of our existence."

Hilda now put her paper in order, and took her pen, her mother busied herself with her work, and in a short time, all was again as quiet in the room, as at the moment when we had the honour of introducing our readers thereto.

CHAPTER VIII.

ROSA'S VISIT TO THE PROFESSOR.

CHRISTMAS eve approached, and with it increased activity in all departments, in preparation for the great family festival at the Commercial Counsellor's. The hostess had her hands quite full, and consulted alternately her housekeeper, upon whose judgment she in certain cases set great value, and her favourite, the young candidate Mannerstedt, to whom the high distinction was accorded, of being allowed to enter the sanctum, where all the little mysteries attendant upon the so called weighty and important affairs were transacted—

Numberless were the little arrangements which Mannerstedt had to charge himself with for the Christmas amusements of the young people—however, he accommodated himself patiently to his fate, and allowed Madame Widen to dispose of his evening as she liked, and in recompense, he had the pleasure of sitting opposite to Rosa at table, and of occasionally exchanging a few words with her, a privilege which Mannerstedt would gladly have purchased with an additional two hours of night watching.

And Rosa too worked almost night and day, to get everything requisite ready; and the captain appeared to have resolved to practise the extraordinary piece of self denial of leaving her in peace; during the last week, he made a visit of only a few minutes daily, and it would have been most difficult for any one who had seen him at this period, to have thought otherwise, than that he deemed himself at the gates of paradise, flitting on the light pinions

of love and hope; if however, on the other hand, they had seen him in his chamber at home alone, the picture which presented itself would have been something very different; it seemed as if he had a double existence, for many an anxious hour did the captain pace up and down his apartment, biting his lips, and twisting his moustache. The Bond—the night at the Residence—reflections upon the swift lapse of the two appointed months, and then the finale of the drama.

“Oh, the devil fly away with such a finale,” he would mutter to himself. “Free lodging in a fortress—to be sure, a man may even there have his society and play-party; but oh! these shameless brutes of creditors are enough to drive a man crazy, and mine above all others. Is this their behaviour? not to believe an officer’s word. I cannot, at any rate, calculate upon getting married for three or four months—not a day earlier, unless my next

attempt to overcome the Counsellor's disinclination succeeds better than those of yesterday—when all I got was, 'we will think about it, my dear captain ; have you spoken with your uncle yet ? and what says he ?' Yes, the devil and all, my dearly beloved uncle says nothing at all of the sort, which my worthy father-in-law expects—no, indeed, upon my soul, he will take good care how he does that. However, I do feel rather curious to know what he will say, when the business cannot be arranged, and the captain has to make a little extra official tour, for having gambled away no inconsiderable part of the purchase money—aye, aye, he'll set heaven and earth in motion, not a doubt of it—or perhaps—and that, the devil take it, would be hard to bear—he may take it into his head to despise me so thoroughly as not to say a word. May Heaven forbid such a misfortune ; for if he is silent, I may say good night to both inheritance and marriage—and I can never survive that ; no, no !

I must set my brains at work, and try and find out some remedy, or be ruined."

And then, at times, an image would arise amid all this confusion of ideas in the captain's head, which he eagerly strove to expel; the image of Hilda, together with the recollection of his own weak and unworthy conduct towards her. What, however, provoked him and pained him the most, and at every moment which was not occupied in thinking upon the critical position of his affairs, drove him actually furious, was the bitter and humiliating assurance that Hilda managed to endure his loss with such admirable patience; that was, in his opinion, what the fervent affection which he had formerly, and even still, entertained for her did not merit; but that was just the way with women, ungrateful, heartless, and inconstant; they always were so—Hilda formed no exception to the general rule.

It was on a dull but tolerably mild September

afternoon that Rosa Widen pulled the bell at the outer door of the Professor's room; the old housekeeper, Madame Brun, opened it, and conducted her to the inner door of his own peculiar apartment.

"Shall I not disturb him, dear Madame Brun?" asked Rosa, in a low and timid voice.

"Oh no, miss; the Professor has had his nap, and is in the best possible humour; just go in—go in at once."

And so saying, the only hostess the house could boast of, left the little hall, and not without a violent beating at her heart, Rosa knocked at the door.

"Who is there?—come in," said the deep voice of the Professor.

The maiden quickly opened the door, and entered.

It was the Professor's writing-room and study—unchanged for more than twenty years—dark and dusty, with dark blue hangings,

and having every corner stuffed and piled so full of books and manuscripts that there was scarcely room for a chair.

Professor Ling was seated in an extremely old-fashioned easy chair, before a large table, covered with dusty pamphlets and innumerable stray scraps of paper; he had on a long grey garment or gown, which he must have worn during his nap; but it was as completely covered with flue and feathers, as if he had been powdered; his feet were clad in flannel socks, and, moreover, stuck into an immense pair of old slippers of morocco, which had once been green, and were likewise liberally sprinkled with flue; on his head was a red and white knitted night-cap, and a large pair of spectacles upon his nose.

As Rosa turned the latch, the Professor had half turned his head round, and, as soon as he perceived her, got up as quickly as his lumbered feet would allow; he extended his hand in the most friendly way to his young visitor, and

in a tone, uncommonly charming for him, said—

“Welcome, my dear child; do you come thus alone? Surely Ferdinand is with you? the fellow might have told me that you were going to honor me with a visit.”

“Pray forgive me, dear sir, if I came inopportunist,” implored Rosa. “Ferdinand is not to blame, for he knows nothing of my visit.”

“Good—very good, my child, you are all the more welcome, that your visit is on my account alone: but now go into the little room on the left, there it is warm and cheerful, and amuse yourself, for a while, with what you can find; I will come to you immediately.”

Rosa nodded kindly to the old man, and went into the apartment he had pointed out, which was larger, better furnished, and pleasanter than the other; as it also contained a number of rare plants, which the Professor had a pleasure in collecting about him, and

various other curiosities of all sorts, Rosa easily found means to amuse herself.

Meanwhile the Professor sounded a little silver bell, which stood upon his writing-table, and Madame Brun entered at its well-known tinkle.

"See and get some extra good coffee," said the old gentleman, "and serve it in the gilded East India service—and bring some of the best of the cakes and rubbish which women like to dip in to their coffee to spoil its flavor."

The housekeeper turned quickly to the door to execute his orders with all possible dispatch.

"Now, now, Madame Brun," called her master after her, "do not be in such a hurry—wait a little, Madame Brun, where the deuce are you running to—do not you see that I am sitting here in my old morning-gown? bring me my blue over-coat, and help me into those half-boots—oh—oh—so—the devil fetch the foot; I can scarcely stand upon it. Give me my stick—that's right; and now the pipe

there—no, not that, the one with the gold mountings—good—and the tobacco-bag—there that will do—and the key of the desk there—now then, I am in order ; and now be as quick as you can, Madame Brun, and when everything is ready, take it altogether into the yellow room.”

And forthwith the old housekeeper went out at one door, while the Professor hobbled through the other, and after casting one more searching look around, to see that no keys were sticking in the locks where they had no business, and that everything was in order as he wished it, he opened the door and went into the room, where Rosa, standing at a handsome cage, and admiring its still more beautiful feathered inmate—was awaiting him.

“ Once more kindly welcome, my dear child,” said he, as he seated himself on the sofa, and grimacing all the while, tried in vain to get his foot, which was in purgatory, in its stiff leather

covering into a comfortable position, while he signed to Rosa to take possession of the other corner. Rosa had observed at once the distinguished politeness which her host had shewn her, by the improvements of his outer man; but she also noticed at the same time that as regarded his feet, this was a stretch of politeness, which gave him very considerable pain and uneasiness—with kindly solicitude she therefore said—

“My good, kind uncle, you must really not stand on ceremony. Indeed I shall not allow it,” and without further explanation or waiting for a reply, she tripped lightly into his study, and immediately returned smiling, with the old man’s comfortable roomy slippers in her hand. Now such an attention as this would not have done for every one. The Professor’s habitual and characteristic distrust would have taken immediate alarm, and have adopted some unpleasant conclusion, which would have placed the officious civility of his guest in an un-

favorable light, but Rosa did it all so naturally and simply that the sharpest and most critical observer must have seen at once that she was only following the dictates of her own kind heart, and was quite unactuated by either interested or selfish motives in this little attention to his comfort, and consequently the Professor took it all with the best possible good humor.

“No indeed, my dear child,” he said, half resisting, “that won’t do—I am a regular old bear!”

But, notwithstanding, he helped Rosa, with manifest satisfaction, to liberate his foot from its purgatory, and with a hearty feeling of delighted relief thrust it into the elysium of his slipper. Moreover, he allowed Rosa, without any further objection, to put a couple of cushions underneath it, and when all was arranged, and our good Professor found himself so comfortable and kindly disposed again, he patted Rosa’s cheek and said—

"And now, my girl, you have some little business with me?"

"Only a friendly entreaty from my parents, in which I heartily and cordially unite. That uncle Ling will make one of our family circle on Christmas eve."

"Oh dear, oh dear," replied the Professor, "you see, my child, that can't be, the gout has taken obstinate possession, since I was last at your house. No, no more going out of evenings for old Ling, he must stay at home if he wishes to maintain friendly relations with his old enemy."

"Oh, I am so very sorry," said Rosa, "and I am sure my parents and Ferdinand will be so much grieved."

"Bah," said the Professor, and the old sarcastic smile once more curled his lips. "Bah, that's all nonsense. I would not give much for the grief, but I would not willingly refuse a request of yours, and so try if you

cannot ask something else, that I may see if I can pleasure you."

"Oh, uncle, pray promise no more than you will afterwards be willing to perform," said Rosa, smiling, "for I will take you at your word, rely upon it."

"Do so, my girl, but quick, and no beating about the bush, for I hate all that—speak without fear if you have anything to ask for yourself."

"I will then, uncle, for I have a request, and that is, that you will be so kind as to help me arrange a little business."

"Business," said the old man, and his eyebrows almost imperceptibly contracted. "I am not very fond of hearing that word from a young girl's lips, but all the same—let's hear my child what you have to say."

"Well then, uncle, the short of the matter is this, that Ferdinand, who in the short term of our acquaintance, could not possibly gain a

more correct knowledge of my character and ways of thinking, has given me credit for a weakness very common to our sex. I mean a liking for presents and ornaments for my toilette, and he has been so generous, in his wish to gratify this inclination, as to make a sacrifice, which has given me great pain, not only on account of the loss itself, but because his behaviour has shown a want of confidence in his bride. His wishes and his means of gratifying them were so little in unison that he had the generosity to pledge his beautiful brown horse to the rich dyer, Brenner, and it is still in his hands. I have learned this from sure authority, and it is my earnest wish, with a sum of money which my mother has given me for the purpose, and through our kind uncle's mediation, to release his beautiful horse, and restore it to him, without letting him know, either now or hereafter, to whom he is indebted for this trifling service, for should he learn this he could not but feel more

vexation and annoyance than getting his horse back again could recompence."

The Professor had listened attentively to Rosa's simple narrative. For some seconds he sat silent, he then took her hand and said, in a gentle tone—

"Your generosity and delicacy, my dear, do you equal honor ; and I esteem my nephew—the blockhead—most fortunate in getting a wife who is ten times too good for him. To go and pledge the horse, which I made him a present of as a colt, and to Brenner, the dyer, the old rascal, whom he knows I can't bear. No, no, he is really too thoughtless and idle, the boy ! However, when I come to consider the matter closer, I must own that this time, he committed his folly with a good motive, and as I neglected to give him any money for the purpose, which I ought to have done, it is but reasonable that I should take the matter upon myself now, and in all respects that will be the best way."

"Yes, but my dear uncle," urged Rosa, "that was not just what I wished, and now you deprive me of a pleasure."

"Indeed I do not my dear, if you consider the matter rightly," rejoined the Professor, "I can't believe that your intentions arose from vanity; and if that is not the case, you must admit, that should Ferdinand, spite of all our precautions, become aware of the rights of the business, the idea that you have been obliged to pay for your own bridal presents yourself, could not be otherwise than very painful to his pride; no, no, just leave it all to me, that is the best way, and thus you will escape all the disagreeables, which might possibly arise, if it should hereafter be discussed in our little hours of chat."

Rosa's sound judgment and delicacy of feeling, told her that the Professor was quite right, she therefore gratefully pressed his hand, and replied—

"Well then, I will leave the settlement of

this affair entirely to my kind uncle Ling, only promise me not to reproach poor Ferdinand about it."

"I will promise that," said the old man, "I will not mention a syllable of the matter to him; and now let us drop the subject—and you must praise my excellent old housekeeper's coffee."

Madame Brun now brought in a most elegant equipage, which she placed upon the large, old-fashioned table, with a proud and gratified smile, as she eagerly listened to her old master's kind eulogiums.

The Professor was an agreeable host, and two hours passed away pleasantly enough, after which Rosa returned home, having first received a cordial invitation to repeat her visit as often as she liked, with the assurance that she would always be most welcome.

The following morning, before Captain Ferdinand was up, his servant entered his room,

and gave him a small, thin letter, sealed with a wafer; after a hasty glance, he broke it open, expecting from its appearance a dun, and to his great astonishment, and no little delight, drew forth his promissory note to Brenner, formally receipted and cancelled.

"Where the d—l did you get this from?" he asked the servant, with a comfortable stretch and a yawn.

"From a boy, sir, who brought the horse and it is now in the stable."

Captain Ferdinand got up in high glee, and dressed himself with all possible expedition; most fortunately it never entered his head, that he had to thank any member of the Commercial Counsellor's family for this pleasure—as little did his thoughts turn upon the Professor; no, it must of course have been some of his comrades, who had generously clubbed together to get him out of his unpleasant position. However, after passing the whole morning, visiting and enquiring among

these obliging souls, to discover the authors of this chivalrous action, he came to the conclusion that he must have been mistaken, and that the aid must have come from quite another quarter—he therefore started forthwith to Brenner the dyer, as his honour forbade his remaining under any obligation of the kind to any one from whom perhaps he ought not to accept such a favour; however, the uneasy thought that the whole affair might possibly revert to its former position, was not a little relieved on learning here, without any difficulty, that his uncle's old domestic had been the negotiator; ashamed, but also affected, for the captain was by no means devoid of sensations of gratitude, though they soon evaporated, he hurried off to the Professor's, and into his study.

“So ho!” exclaimed his uncle to him, as he at once saw what was coming, and knew of old, that Ferdinand on such occasions was very apt to launch out into a torrent of eloquent

thanks, and all that kind of bombast ; “ now, now boy, that will do, it is all right this time, and have the goodness to impress upon your mind, that if you feel inclined from henceforth to indulge in these sort of follies, I am by no means equally inclined to help you out of the mud any more, and so act sensibly and honestly for the future, and try to make yourself worthy of the angel whom you hope to get for a wife.”

“ Yes, by my honour, a very nice hope indeed I have,” cried the captain, indiscreetly forgetting the whole affair of the morning in one second, “ a charming hope, indeed, when not a single word has been said touching the paradise, to which I am to have the felicity of conducting my angel when I get her ; or to speak less figuratively, what am I to get to keep us both ? a couple of days ago I spoke to the Ccunsellor, and begged him to fix the wedding day, on which occasion, I really was in hopes that he would have said something

sensible about portion, house furniture, and such like other desirable things—but not a bit of it, he merely said that he imagined it would be quite soon enough to fix the wedding day, when my noble uncle had expressed his intentions upon the subject.”

“How, what?” exclaimed the Professor angrily, “I—I am to state my intentions! is the man quite mad? but it is just what I say, the whole family together, with the exception of Rosa, is not worth a copper kreutzer. Cunning, covetous animals, the man as well as his wife, they’d like to catch the old bear, eh? but it won’t do, no, he is too sly for them, Ferdinand, boy—not a stiver will I give ye—no, as true as I am alive, in this way they shall never get one one doit of my property as long as I have anything to say to its disposal; did any one ever hear of such a thing? Why if I had myself sought the girl for the boy, such chatter as that might possibly have been listened to—but now, when neither one party

or the other has ever even thought fit to look about them first, but has rushed neck and heels into a position out of which they can't find their way—now, forsooth, it is a nice time to wait for what I have to say ; well, at any rate, I'll be quit of it to-day, for I love all open, and fair, and above board, and so I shall just write to the Commercial Counsellor, that if the marriage is to depend upon my contributing to forward it with my property, he is waiting and expecting in vain, for that I have made up my mind to do nothing more for you whatever, beyond the sum I have paid for your promotion.”

Ferdinand turned pale with grief and vexation, he however saw clearly enough that it was necessary to control himself as much as possible, and with forced composure, he replied—

“ Very well, uncle, destroy then if you will the last gleam of hope that remains for me ; to—I will not attempt to deny it—to re-establish my

completely ruined pecuniary prospects. Insult, repulse, if you will, the family which has met me with so much kindness. Your wish will doubtless be accomplished, for the answer to such a peculiar and uncalled for declaration on your part, must be the breaking off the contract, and how deeply will not the charming affectionate Rosa feel hurt at our behaviour. However, I will not, uncle, strive to dissuade you from your purpose. Act as you think best, but remember I beseech you that it is my last hope."

"Hope," repeated the Professor, contemptuously, yet his tone shewed that he was in some measure softened. "Hope, it is but a poor and unfortunate hope at best, my dear Ferdinand, and I very much fear that your affairs will not gain much therefrom. If you really loved the girl—which she assuredly deserves, for her own sake—then it would be quite another thing, but this is not the case—you have openly confessed to me that your wish for

this union is grounded on the hope of re-establishing your finances, and in this case I should advise you not to be in too great a hurry about the wedding; it would be better altogether to wait until spring—we shall then see what time and circumstances bring forth, and as to the rest, it is the most honorable course to tell the counsellor openly and fairly that he has nothing to expect from me. True, I had intended to have made Rosa a small present befitting my circumstances, on her wedding day, but this was only on account of my affection for the girl. It would never have come into your hands, for it never entered my head to throw away any thing upon your creditors, and that you may assuredly rely upon. You have, by your own folly, created this hungry rabble, and you must manage to satisfy their voracity yourself. For Rosa, on the contrary, I have a great regard, and as long as I have a bit of bread she shall share it with me, but never, to all eternity, will I allot any de-

cided portion to you ; and, moreover, it is my sincere wish that the alliance between you may come to nothing, for she is far too good for such a goose. She is a pearl whose price you neither understand nor can appreciate. I wish with all my heart that you were less frivolous, my dear Ferdinand, that you were worthy of her, loved her, and were beloved by her in return—then—but it is of no use talking of what might be, when we know only too well what is.”

This speech of the Professor alternately seared and soothed the economical wounds of Ferdinand’s heart ; at all events it was more than he had ventured to hope. He gratefully pressed his uncle’s hand, and earnestly entreated him—

“ Say nothing to the Commercial Counsellor until he agitates the question himself. Promise me this, uncle. Let us at least enjoy Christmas, and domestic peace for the present.”

"So be it," said the old man, who had quite recovered his ordinary composure, but at the first hint from the Counsellor or his wife I speak my mind out at once, without, however, mentioning a syllable of what I have confided to you regarding my intended wedding present, for that is a voluntary pledge of my good will for Rosa, and is to be left entirely out of the calculation."

With a heart considerably lightened—for only let an ounce of hope get into the balance, and it will weigh down a whole pound of trouble—Ferdinand left the Professor to drown all disagreeables, with some pleasant companions, in a smoking bowl of punch, which one of them had lost in a wager, and which they were now going to empty together like brothers.

CHAPTER IX.

A LETTER—THE FAMILY FESTIVAL.

ON the 24th of December, at the hour of dinner, Frank Mannerstedt, who had just finished his frugal meal, was standing before his writing-table, and carefully rolling up some vocal pieces of which the words and music were both his own. One day when alone with Rosa, he had played to her on his guitar, and accompanied it with his rich tenor, the full tones streaming from his soul had infinitely pleased her, and she had requested him to give her the music.

“I have it not,” Mannerstedt had replied,

"it is only here," and he laid his hand upon his heart.

"That is a pity," said Rosa, "for I should so like to have had it."

"If I were only happy enough, dear Miss Widen, to ——" but Mannerstedt got no farther; the conclusion of this speech was interrupted by some one, but he had frequently recalled to his mind Rosa's wish, and his own proposed reply, and had now written out music and words, in order to offer them to Rosa this Christmas eve.

He would venture it, for every word was so pure, so holy, that not a trace of that language which the wish might have spoken, breathed on it to sully its brightness. Its entire expression was that of still sweet sadness, which delights, without inflicting a single pang. Mannerstedt had folded up his little packet, and was upon the point of enclosing it with a string—when some one tapped at his door.

"Come in," cried he, cheerfully, for his soul

felt light; and bright, fresh visions alone were in his heart. He felt happy in having, for so long a period, daily attained the summit of his wishes, in having seen, and spoken to Rosa; to have desired more, would have been madness, and Mannerstedt was a youth of sound good sense and principles, and he felt assured that these bright, kindly days would form a pleasing picture in his recollections, which, amidst the vicissitudes of his future life would point to a golden star upon each unwritten page, where Skulda might inscribe her dark Runic characters.

“Come in,” cried Mannerstedt.

And immediately the well-known little, rough figure of the post boy appeared in the door-way; he entered, and gave Mannerstedt a letter.

Frank started, the strong, young man shook like a wind-stirred aspen—the boy departed—he had sufficient instinct to be aware that it was of no use waiting here for a fee.

Mannerstedt seated himself upon his bed, with the letter in his hand—his glance was dimmed—he scarcely saw the address—but the post-mark of his native town, the black seal and edges, the messengers of ill, he recognised alas too surely; sorrow and agitating sensations had nearly deprived him of the power to breathe.

At length, summoning up the whole energy of his soul, he broke the seal, the envelop contained two letters—the one was in his mother's hand. For a second, Frank's eye brightened with an expression of happiness—he unfolded the letter, as, full of dark forebodings, he put the other on one side—through the mist of gathering tears which dimmed his eyes, he read as follows :—

“ My own Frank, my tenderly beloved Son,

“ Forgive thine old mother, that she would fain have spared thee as long as

possible the intelligence of her ever failing health. My child, my own, good, dear son, who hast been, through my entire life, my pride, my hope, my joy in every trial, my comfort in every mishap, receive my last abundant blessing, which I here trace with feeble, trembling hand—my blessing for all thine inexpressible and fervent affection which thou hast so devoted to thine old mother, for all the joy which thou has caused her by having ever walked in the paths of virtue—never having despised her counsel, and for having continually sought to sweeten her existence. All this, when I think thereon, makes my departure hence far from bitter, and fills my dying heart with all peace and blessedness. I go to be reunited in Heaven to my long and dearly regretted husband, to dwell together with him in a home where our united prayers shall continually be poured out before the Eternal's throne for the prosperity and happiness of our darling, that he may be blessed

with strength and fortitude to bear in future, as he has hitherto done, the ever-changing days of brightness and of storm, and that he may never, never forget that there is one aim, one bright and glorious aim, for which it is beautiful to strive.

“Oh, my Frank, if the prayer of a loving mother is heard; and, at this instant, the kindly angel of faith and hope stands beside my couch, and whispers, that it is—then—then, even on this side of the grave, will a ray of brilliancy penetrate the misty veil which has overshadowed thy spring of youth, and the blossoms of thy manly age will spring forth fresh and vigorous in the fruitful soil.

“Yet, my beloved son, it is not always in the fulfilment of our temporal wishes that our happiness is assured—full often must we learn to combat them, perchance to our great ultimate profit, for without frequent struggle with ourselves, we can never attain perfection. Much,

much have I thought over that portion of thy life in which the young and uncorrupted heart will experience the first dawn of that passion, which full as often degenerates as ennobles it; and I must have much deceived myself, if this has not already come to pass; but even in this too I can feel calm and easy about thee. In such a soul as thine, there is no room for aught but pure, ennobling feelings; and if these could only be maintained at the cost of honor and duty, or peace of mind, because they awakened in thee a fruitless struggle after an aim too far distant to be attainable, then do I know full well that thou wouldst call up the entire stedfast energies of thy soul, and fly from the temptation, and thus it would, by degrees, become more easy to overcome; but, rely not too blindly upon thine own strength; there are moments when even the best and strongest man may become a mere plaything in the hands of the allpowerful

feelings of love; and therefore rather fly temptation in whatever shape it may disguise itself; and remember that the aberrations of passion never lead to happiness.

“I have written this, my dear son, with many interruptions, and am growing weaker daily. Oh, how unspeakably would it not have gladdened my mother’s heart, might I but once more in life have gazed in the eyes of my darling; and do I not know that at the greatest sacrifice of self, thou wouldst fly with ardour to my sick bed, didst thou but know that I was suffering; but, my own Frank, I must suppress this wish, for that which would await thee here, would agitate too severely thy tender heart, and unfit thee too much for thy duties. Thy means are too small. No—no—not here, thou idol of my heart, may we meet again—but there—there above. Some few years, more or less, tossed upon the waste and stormy sea of time, here signify but little, when

we have the hope of an imperishable eternity hereafter.

“And now farewell—farewell—mine own beloved son—my eyes are dim, and I can scarcely hold my pen. Our friend, Counsellor Sifver, will charge himself with all that is needful to be done, and will kindly sell the small remnant of my property, and convey it to thee; with God’s blessing, it will suffice to enable thee to continue on that course, which thou hast so honorably begun, and, as I trust, wilt carry out in like manner to the end; and now call reason to thine aid, my own boy, dear as thou hast ever been, and bear this blow as becomes a sincere disciple of our Lord. My time is passed, and I long to be at rest—all will soon be over—and soon, my joy in this earthly existence, shall we be united again for ever, before the face of our Father in Heaven. May the source of all grace and goodness pour out His richest blessings upon

thy head, is the last, last prayer that my dying lips can utter,

“Your faithful and loving mother,

“Even till death,

“BEATA MANNERSTEDT.”

Tears streamed down Frank's cheeks, as, with profound, unutterable emotion, and with a kind of deadly anxiety, he pressed to his lips this last pledge of a mother so inwardly, so fervently loved; and a long, dreadful pause ensued, ere he could summon nerve to take up Sifver's letter, which he had laid aside; he knew its contents beforehand. It had been written a week after the first, and informed him that his mother had departed to the realms of peace, whither, after her last work, her letter to Frank, was accomplished, she had longed to flee away, and be at rest.

What the Counsellor had written about minor matters, Frank did not see; he had

thrown himself upon his bed, both letters firmly crushed in his hands; he had no more tears to shed—all was over—the last tie was rent—that one only heart was cold, which on earth has been all his own—not another being lived who loved him, who would pray for him, with him, who would rejoice with him, and sorrow when he suffered—not one relative—not a friend—he was alone—quite alone—upon the wide waste of life—he felt it deeply, strongly—his sorrow was greater than could be spoken—and hour after hour passed away—it had become dark, he knew it not—the time was long past when he should have been at Mr. Widen's house, but neither the invitation nor the hour dwelt in his memory—he was sensible of nothing in this outer world—all was absorbed, engrossed within.

The tea-table had been set out for the family festival in the large drawing-room at the commercial Counsellor's—at the upper end, the hostess did the honors—she was surrounded

by some ten or a dozen aged ladies, distant relatives of the family, and who were always held at a becoming and respectful distance by Madame Widen—and it was only on certain festal evenings, during the year, that they enjoyed the happiness of being invited to the house of the wealthy speculator; and here they were at liberty to eat their hearts for spite, while their hostess condescendingly exerted herself to entertain them, by describing a whole mass of things, about which they either felt no sort of interest, or knew much better than she did.

A number of gentlemen, in like manner, members of the family stock, and guests at the same festivities, stood around the Commercial Counsellor, who sat comfortably in a sofa nook, smoking his pipe, while they, with one hand behind them, and the other stuck into their waistcoats, humbly gave ear, while their host was kind enough to indulge his guests with one anecdote or another of his youthful

days, when he sat before the desk as a clerk, and only thought of how to play some bit of mischief off upon his patron—or when, in after years, he strayed through foreign lands as an elegant commercial traveller; and, according to the character of each of these anecdotes, his listeners dutifully laughed, or dubiously and with respectful admiration, shook their heads. At a window apart sat Rosa and Captain Ferdinand, busily engaged in a conversation, regarding the good Professor and his taste for solitude; but all these various interesting discourses were continually overtone'd by the merry goings-on in the front hall, where noise and shouts of little throats in powerful chorus resounded from a whole crowd of children, who were frolicking and dancing around the magnificent Christmas tree.

“Rosa, my dear Rosa,” cried her mother, turning her head a little, as far as her new stiff cap, and the multitude of her curls, would allow, “this noise, my love, quite kills me;

you must really go out again, and reduce those young people to order. Heavens, how vexatious, Mannerstedt not having come, and I had reckoned completely upon him to amuse the children, and, in some degree, regulate their happiness within proper bounds—it is past eight,” added the lady, looking at her watch ; “the poor lad does not usually neglect an opportunity of getting a cup of warm tea, which he often has good need of—and really it somehow seems to me as if something must have gone wrong this evening. Rosa dear, do tell Larson to go over and ask if the candidate is coming.”

Rosa hurried out, and, with the greatest expedition, gave the orders which her mother had directed ; she then flew up to her own room for a few minutes, to arrange her Christmas presents once more. She had, indeed, herself began to feel it rather extraordinary and vexatious that Mannerstedt was so late in coming ; but not until her mother said—“it

seems to me as if things cannot be quite right to-day," had a kind of nameless uneasiness, a certain dark and mysterious foreboding awakened in her heart; she then remembered that to comfort his anxiety, she had predicted that he would receive letters on Christmas Eve.

"Only think should it have happened," was the silent current of her thoughts, "that my prediction may have deluded him with the hope of happiness, and have brought him only sorrow. Oh, it would be dreadful! poor, poor young man, was not your cup yet full?"

Rosa stood at a table at the window, looking out upon the street, and whilst her fingers were mechanically employed in turning about a little packet containing a small token which she had destined for him, she listened, with strained attention, to what was passing in the street below. She, however, heard nothing but the noise made by the boys engaged in the procession of the three kings, who were

passing along with loud songs, lighted by large well oiled paper flambeaux, which specially and vividly illuminated the Moor king who preceded them. Not until this little band of joyous children had disappeared into the house next to that of her father, (for they were too simple and old-fashioned to find grace in her mother's eyes) could Rosa hear what went on below; but all was yet so painfully still, and she could not make up her mind to go down, before she heard the well-known sleepy tread of their returning servant, whom she wished to meet, as if by chance, in the ante-room. However, she had to exercise her patience, and minutes and even a quarter of an hour slipped away; at length, she heard Larson returning; but now Rosa felt frightened, and could scarcely bring herself to go out upon the stairs, for it was a bad omen, that Larson was actually running, and as she stood there leaning against the bannister on the lower step, the man rushed in from the entrance hall.

"Well, Larson," said Rosa, addressing him in a tone meant to be quite indifferent, "what is Mr. Mannerstedt about—what makes him so late?"

"Ah, he is so bad," responded Larson, quite out of breath, as he strove to collect himself a little after his run.

"How so bad?" asked Rosa, pale and trembling, "is he ill?"

"Aye, gracious Heaven, that he is—at least I could not make out what else it was," said Larson; "when I got there, I asked, on the second floor, if they knew whether the candidate was at home, and the girl, whom I met, said she believed not, for she had not heard him for some hours past. I was just on the point of going away again with what I had got, when it came into my head that I had mayhap better see myself, and so I groped my way up the confounded, abominable crooked stairs, and looked for the door; the key was in, and I knocked, but no one answered; so I

went in—but the room was as dark as pitch, so that I could not even see my hand. ‘Are you there, Mr Mannerstedt?’ I said, aloud; then I heard a heavy sigh, like as if it came right from the bottom of his heart, from the corner of the room. I felt my way, and, after upsetting a little table, upon which there must have been a many things, for it made a shocking clatter; I got hold of Mr. Mannerstedt’s head. ‘I beg pardon, sir,’ says I. ‘How, in heaven’s name, is it with your honor? Miss Rosa sent me here to see after you, for the mistress has been expecting you this long time.’ ‘Thanks, thanks,’ said he, in a low tone. ‘Well—well, friend,’—but he was not well, for he was glowing like fire—‘but why does not your honor come then, if you are not ill?’ I asked again. ‘Come,’ said he, ‘where—where should I come?’ ‘Eh? what,’ says I, ‘to Mr. Widen’s, as far as I know. All the rest are there already.’ ‘Is it you, Larson?’ said he, raising himself up a little; ‘ah, yes

—true—I recollect now ; but I cannot come ; I am not well ; I have had a sad, sad Christmas Eve—the saddest in all my life ; be so good as to make my excuses to your mistress, for having forgotten to send them word.’ ‘Yes,’ says I, ‘I’ll do that for certain ; but does not your honor want anything ?—lights, or anything else ?’ to which he answered that, ‘I want nothing—nothing ; farewell, Larson.’ ”

Rosa had sufficient fortitude to listen to Larson’s tedious narrative, and to procure some aid for the poor young man, whose grief in his forlorn situation she could well conceive ; she was able to go in, and, though pale and slightly trembling, (for, in addition to her sorrow and uneasiness, she had incautiously stood out so long on the cold steps, with only a thin shawl upon her shoulders, that she had got a slight chill) she managed to communicate to her mother the sad result of Larson’s mission.

“Good God! what wretchedness!” exclaimed the lady, her head-dress shaking with agitation, “who in heaven’s name should comfort the poor young man, if I do not? he has so few houses that he can visit, and in the hour of need, heaven knows the few will get fewer still; but heaven be praised, we have never felt thus; Rosa, do listen to what I am saying my love, and do not stand there so indifferent, and staring at the Christmas tree, when a poor fellow creature is in trouble—Larson, I say, shall go there again directly, and take a couple of candles with him, and if it’s cold in that miserable hole there, he shall have it heated, and at any rate it is best, that he should make the cook’s boy take over some wood upon a barrow; perhaps poor Mannerstedt has no fuel; and Karin, my love, shall go, and take him some tea, and make him drink something warm, and tell the housekeeper to send him some rice broth, and cold fowl; fish is good for nothing when a man is ill; and

Larson might take some Rhenish in a bottle, wine will do him good ; and now, my dear Rosa, don't forget anything : Larson—candles—tea—the housekeeper—rice broth—and fowl—and wine ; if you have got it all right in your head, child, go and have it done as quick as you can."

"Immediately, dearest mama," replied Rosa, and flew into the kitchen to execute all these commissions, which under other circumstances, she would hardly have listened to without a smile ; now, however, she only endeavoured to make Larson and Karin understand, that they were to do all they could to make the poor invalid as comfortable as possible, and she further directed, that one or other of them should come and inform them how Mr. Mannerstedt was, that in case he got worse, a physician might be sent for. After all this had been despatched as expeditiously as possible, Rosa went in again, for her mother had commissioned her to amuse and look after the

children, and though this employment, in her present frame of mind, for the first time in her life appeared somewhat tiresome and painful to her, she felt obliged to take part in their frolics and games, to avoid betraying the extent of her sympathy, and the extreme uneasiness which it occasioned her.

After a while, as her mother chanced to pass the noisy, merry group, she patted her daughter kindly on the shoulder, and said, "he is really a good-natured, amiable being, our captain—"

"How so?" asked Rosa innocently.

"How? why do you know that he jumped up at once from his seat at the gentlemen's table, and left his glass, and guess for what? why, to rouse up the battalion surgeon who is his friend, and to take him with him to our poor candidate; he whispered his intentions to me as he was leaving the room, a few seconds after you had gone out. Is it not pretty and kind, when a person follows a good example that

way? I am so glad that I was able to set it."

"Oh dear mama!" exclaimed Rosa, agreeably surprised at this unexpected trait—"did he really? oh! that was very generous and friendly, and raises him very much in my estimation."

And an hour after when Ferdinand returned, his face flushed and heated with exertion, Rosa had never found him so attractive and amiable; it was the first time that her feelings spoke for him.

"And how is Mr. Mannerstedt? good, generous Ferdinand," she said with unaffected openness, and cordially pressing the hand which he extended to her.

"To-morrow, the doctor says, when the fever leaves him, he will be all well again; it is the loss of his old mother, whom he was so ardently attached to, that has so agitated and shocked him; he received the sad news this evening, and is at present inaccessible to any-

thing but his sorrow. His blood is in a shocking feverish state, and his head aches and burns ; however he has taken the necessary remedies, and with his strong, vigorous constitution, the bodily evil will probably be got over by to-morrow—at least he will be better then.”

As soon as Ferdinand had made his report, and enjoyed for a time the cordiality and kindness, which Rosa appeared disposed to show him this evening, he sat down beside his future father-in-law, with the purpose of pleasing him in every possible way—of Mannerstedt he thought nothing more, he had done what he could for the poor devil, and for the present there was no more to be said ; the captain could, it is true, feel a little affected, when he heard that any one had met with sorrow or misfortune, and that sort of thing, particularly when he heard the narrative from such pretty lips as Rosa’s ; but to think anything more about the matter, or to devote more than a passing moment of capricious generosity,

would have been against his nature, and quite out of the question ; and so, before he had emptied his second glass of punch, Mannerstedt, the garret, and all the misery in the world, except his own, was totally forgotten.

At length the guests were assembled around the long, richly covered table, where the noisy talking, laughter, and bustle of the christmas presents, united with the boisterous outbursts of childish joy from the younger members of the family, formed a highly harmonious union, which however called forth harsh discords in Rosa's bosom. Before her, upon the table, was a perfect mountain of presents, great and small ; the most costly were evidently from the Professor, though the addresses were not in his hand writing ; there was also one large packet for Mr. Frank Mannerstedt ; this could not have been furnished by any one in the Counsellor's house, for the little presents which its members had destined for the Candidate, were set aside

until he should again come among them ; it was then from a stranger hand, and excited, as well among the family of the house, as their guests, wonder and presumptions of all kinds.

“I will take it into my own especial keeping,” said Madame Widen, “and I know that the poor lad when he ventures out again, will receive it with the greatest pleasure from my hands.”

Nobody either wished or dared to contest this somewhat arbitrary decision and excessively self-satisfied presumption of the lady. Every one took her view of the question—and so it was.

When the party rose from table, they broke up almost immediately—the gentlemen and ladies bowed and curtsied, paid compliments right and left, and expressed their eloquent thanks for so highly agreeable and pleasantly-spent an evening.

Madame Widen said—

“ Ah, my dear friends, pray do not make so much ado—there is nothing to be thankful for—you have only been obliged to amuse yourselves, that is all.”

The Counsellor extended a couple of fingers, and executed dignified nods ; and, at last, all the young people were wrapped up, and the whole party, some in sledges, and some on foot, on their way home.

“ Now, thank God,” exclaimed Madame Widen, as she drew a long breath, and threw herself upon the sofa, “ thank God, that one can breathe freely again, at last. Oh, what shocking bores these family evenings are ! It is lucky we have not many of them during the year, or I never could endure it—for it is most excessively wearisome to be bowing and smiling right and left, when one is fit to yawn oneself to death ; however, it was something new for you, my dear Ferdinand—you have never had the fortune, or misfortune, to pass a

Christmas Eve here, in the family circle, in this way before."

"No, no, not exactly here," replied the captain, with a smile; "but formerly, uncle Borgensköld and his good folks used to come to the Professor's every Christmas Eve, and those were regular festal evenings; however, they are past and gone, and never to return," he added, with a slight sigh, as his thoughts strayed back to those vanished days when he too had believed in real happiness.

"Surely, surely," said Madame Widen, as if she thought it necessary or proper to say something. "I do remember having heard that the Professor had broken off all acquaintance with his brother for good and all; and though it is difficult to form a judgment in such matters, I believe he acted rightly in so doing; but you must make yourself so much the more to him, my dear Ferdinand; I am convinced that your uncle, the honorable old

man, has a great degree of affection for you—what do you think yourself—is it not so?”

“ Oh, yes—I really do believe he has, in some degree,” replied Ferdinand; “ but, alas! not to any such very great extent! However, his tenderness is devoted to a worthier object, and one which I love myself too much, to be envious of. He assured me, only a few days ago, with a degree of emotion quite unusual in him, that he had the highest possible esteem for Rosa—that she was a perfect jewel in his eyes—and that as long as he had a bit of bread, (his own words), she should share it with him.”

Whilst Captain Ferdinand thus strung his quotations together, Madame Widen’s countenance gradually brightened up, until it shone like a full-blown sunflower in all its splendour; and the Counsellor himself laid down his pipe upon the stove, and listened with eager interest.

“Ah, the noble, high-minded old soul,” exclaimed Madame Widen, perfectly charmed, “how beautiful, and how simply expressed! that he should love our little Rosa so much. Well, well, she deserves it, and that is the truth—for she is gentleness and goodness itself—so modest and so sensible! Aye, aye, indeed, the Professor has always been right—he was always a man of clear discrimination and judgment. She is, indeed, as he says, an angel! dear child—though I am her mother, I may venture to confess it, when she does not hear me—only see how she often puts her little brothers to bed like an affectionate mother—and lulls them to sleep with her pretty stories, when no one else can manage them, the wild, noisy boys—and then her kind solicitude for every being around her. Oh, I often think, how well suited she would be to tend the old man in his precious latter days—for, as to women, affection and self-denial, are parts of

our nature—and you may rest assured that you will get a capital wife.”

“Ah, my dear mother, I have never, for an instant, had a doubt of it,” replied Ferdinand; “and have but one wish, and that is, that this happiness may quickly be my lot. I assure you, that I long most anxiously for the time, and that my new relations have already made me quite another man; all the amusements which have hitherto attracted me, seem to lose their worth, and disperse like empty vapors, when I would grasp them; and I feel even more and more that from henceforth my happiness can only flourish in perfection under the graceful sheltering palm tress of married life.”

“Ah, you rogue,” said the lady, smiling graciously, and tapping his cheek with her worked handkerchief; “but seriously,” added she, “I see no actual objection to the fulfilment of your wish; what think you, my dear

Widen—could not we fix the wedding for your birth-day, the 20th of February.”

“Oh, yes, to be sure,” said the merchant, “there would be nothing impossible in that—but first of all we must know where we are—a wedding is quite another affair from a betrothal—as engaged, young people may associate with each other as long as they please without anxiety; but once married, care soon knocks at the door, unless they have taken careful precautions against its approach beforehand—now this is my conviction—and, therefore, I should wish, in the first place, to see a written testimony of the Professor’s good feelings and intentions, in either Ferdinand’s or Rosa’s hands—not because I—I doubt them in the least—but because my duty as a father demands that I should first see this matter clearly and properly arranged, so as to meet every possible contingency; as soon as all this is settled, I am quite ready to have the bans asked, as soon as you like, my dear Ferdinand;

and you may add, that the sooner it comes to pass, the better I shall be pleased."

And so saying, the Commercial Counsellor gave his hand to the captain, who felt himself obliged to respect the hint; and kissing the tips of his future mother-in-law's fingers, desired his cordial remembrances to Rosa, and hurried away home, his heart full of new troubles, aroused by the pertinacity of Mr. Widen, and his head giddy and confused with reflections of every kind and shape.

These, however, all took a new and gloomy turn, as he observed upon his table a small packet, directed in Hilda's well-known hand. Dark fire flashed from his eyes, as he opened it, and found his own offering returned unopened.

Since their child's days, they had kept up the custom of—on Christmas Eve, when so many a heart ventures a happy guess at the wishes of another—sending each other little tokens of kindness and regard; but she would

not now even accept this trifling token of attention from him as her cousin; this was hard, and caused him to experience a sensation of something very like deep and genuine affliction. He had not that fine power of discernment which would have made it clear to him that, with her character, Hilda could hardly have acted otherwise. The fire in his stove was burning brightly up, and, pressing a light kiss upon the hand-writing, he threw it, together with his own little packet, into the flames, and went to bed.

CHAPTER X.

THE PACKET—A LITTLE SCENE IN THE ANTE-
ROOM—AND AN INTERVIEW BETWEEN THE
BETROTHED COUPLE.

ON Christmas-day, there was a heavy snow-storm; and as there was no party at Mr. Widen's house, and they themselves had no engagement, the general discomfort was still more augmented by the wretched weather. Everybody seemed bored, and yawned unmercifully. The captain had dined with one of his superior officers, and was to remain there until evening; and the family was, therefore, quite alone.

The Counsellor was playing patience, and inclined to quarrel with the cards, because they would not go right, notwithstanding all the ingenuity he shewed in turning over every individual card, and canvassing its possible significance. His wife was turning over the leaves of a Magazine of arts, fashions, and novelties. Rosa practising a favorite air at her piano. The boys playing at a side-table. And the girls dressing their dolls.

There was a slight scraping of feet in the passage ; Rosa suddenly stopped playing, and her heart began beating with an impetuosity that rendered any attempt at singing out of the question, for it quite took away her breath. One, two three, eternal seconds which, utterly unmarked by the other members of the party, seemed to her to creep by with a deadly tedium. At length, the door opened, and Mannerstedt's tall figure appeared, a welcome relief to the tiresome monotony.

"Dear me, for Heaven's sake," cried Madame Widen, tossing aside her fashion

to the other end of the sofa, "is that you, Mr. Mannerstedt, you come at exactly the right moment; we have no company this evening, and you are most heartily welcome. But good heavens, Mr. Mannerstedt, how could you venture out under the circumstances, when you were in bed with fever this very morning, and as we heard, not at all well."

Mannerstedt bowed deeply and replied—

"Certainly I did not feel well at all, but it was chiefly the mind which suffered, and as all feverish symptoms had disappeared by the afternoon, I felt a wish to go out and breathe the fresh air, which I knew would do me good, and at the same time take the opportunity of waiting upon you to express my warm and devoted thanks for the very great and unmerited kindness which you showed to me in my sorrow."

"That you must really say nothing about, my dear Mannerstedt, nothing at all," replied Madame Widen, most graciously, "we lamented

your sad loss, with all our hearts, but such is the common course of this life, and we must make the best of it, for when once a thing has happened, I say, and always shall say, mourning about it answers no purpose."

Mannerstedt bowed silently, in answer to these very superficial arguments of consolation, and turned to pay his respects to the Counsellor, who merely looked up for an instant, from his cards, nodded kindly to him, and said—

"Very sorry, very sorry for you indeed, Mr. Mannerstedt, but pray excuse me, for I am just now so completely taken up with my patience, that you must amuse yourself with the ladies, I am sure they will be quite glad of a companion to relieve their loneliness."

And so saying he resumed his cards, to which he devoted his exclusive attention, and Frank now had to speak to Rosa.

His unexpected arrival, which she had not even ventured to hope for, had driven the warm blood to her beautiful cheeks; but happily, during her mother's lengthy address,

she had sufficient time to collect herself, and when Mannerstedt, pale and depressed, with deep and silent sadness in his dark glance, approached, she gave him her hand saying, in a low voice—

“I assure you, dear Mr. Mannerstedt, that I sympathise with your sorrow, from the bottom of my heart. I well know how dearly you loved the departed; and I therefore know too how you must necessarily mourn her loss; but your mind is strong and I hope and trust that you will keep up your fortitude, and not give way, after sorrow has received its first and natural tribute.”

In Rosa's voice lay a far deeper and warmer sympathy than in the words themselves, which penetrated Mannerstedt's heart, and he ventured to retain her hand for an instant in his own, as he replied—

“Oh no, dear kind Rosa, be assured that however difficult the struggle may be, I will not fail to overcome it.”

“Eh, eh, Rosa dear, what are you thinking

of," cried her mother, who could not exactly hear what they were saying, but had a kind of idea that that there was a little too much sensibility going on, "you should not touch upon Mr. Mannerstedt's sorrows, they are quite painful enough. Come here, my dear candidate, and sit down by me, I have some better comfort to offer. An unknown friend of Mr. Mannerstedt's sent a packet here on Christmas Eve, and I kept it on purpose to deliver it into his hands myself. Caroline, my love, put your doll down, and go into mama's cabinet, and bring that large parcel which is lying on the divan table."

Caroline's reluctant fingers, after a twice repeated, "make haste my darling," laid aside the dear doll, and in a few seconds she returned with the packet.

"Thank you, dear Caroline," said mama, kissing the child's forehead—"is not she a dear child, and so obedient too," addressing Mannerstedt.

"Oh yes, very pretty and charming," replied Frank, and hoped to be quit of the matter ; however, the lady continued in a familiar tone, and leaning forwards so as to give her communication an air of importance, "I have just been thinking that we might commence with Caroline's singing, she should learn the notes in good tune, for has she not a beautiful voice, so soft and sweet and full of tone ?"

Now if Mannerstedt, had answered yes, to this question, he would have infringed upon the truth which was always sacred to him, and he therefore only ventured most cautiously to express an opinion that it would hardly be possible to judge of the qualifications of so young a child, with any certainty as yet. On any other occasion Madame Widen would have received this opinion rather ungraciously; now, however, she felt obliged to let it pass, when she considered Frank's affliction, which naturally made him see every thing in an unfavor-

able light—and the unopened parcel besides—and so she calmed her curiosity, and at the same time gave a token of her noble and elevated mode of thinking, by appearing not to have remarked, that, in his sorrow, he had ventured to have a different opinion from herself; and consequently the usual gracious smile resumed its place upon her lips, and was even milder and more winning than ever.

“We can discuss that point hereafter, but now do see what this contains.”

To say the truth, Frank would far rather have waited until he had returned to his own lonely chamber, but this would have seriously annoyed Madame Widen, and Frank felt that he could not be ungrateful and provoke her anger, after receiving so many marks of her favor and kindness. Whilst he was engrossed with his reflections upon this critical state of affairs, and thoughtfully turning and twisting the parcel about in his hands—the lady called to her youngest daughter :—

“Josephine, my love, bring the scissors here, which you are using.”

The little love was a miracle of obedience; she came in an instant. Mama took the scissors, and said, “there,” and, with a rapid movement of her own noble fingers, the string flew asunder, and, of course, Mannerstedt, as in duty bound, said—

“I am most exceedingly obliged to you, generous madam.”

And the parcel was opened, two more wraps of paper were about it, but at length the last was removed, and a black suit, of the utmost fineness and most fashionable cut, was displayed to view; as she hastily took it out to convince herself that it was a complete suit, which, to her satisfaction, she found to be the case, a folded paper fell out, upon which was written—

“Accept this from a friend to industry and honourable exertion.”

In the paper were also a couple of bank-notes each of fifty rix-dollars.

Mannerstedt stood there with it in his hand, he was silent, while a tear of gratitude glittered in his eye—and we say no more than the strictest truth, when we assure our readers that the conviction that there was a human being of such generous and disinterested feelings to be found in the world, and that he had been so fortunate as to attract the attention of such a person to himself, filled Frank's heart with more joyous and happier sensations than the possession of the presents which his unknown benefactor had bestowed upon him.

“Widen, my love—Rosa dear—Heavens, our poor Mannerstedt has reason for rejoicing; these clothes—look, look—only look,” and the lady held the suit aloft, took the notes from Mannerstedt's hand, and shewed them to her husband.

Yet all this, though anything but becoming, had such a colouring of real good will and

kindness, though it was after Madame Widen's own way, that Frank allowed it to pass without opposition. Rosa seemed to look only at the writing.

"What do you think, my angel?" asked her mother. "You know the hand? Oh, I should so like to find out whence it has all come. Have you ever seen the hand before, Rosa dear?"

"No—I cannot recollect it just this instant," replied she, slowly; but Mannerstedt, whose eye had attentively followed her movements, thought that he could discover that she only avoided speaking her thoughts, in order not to profane the giver's name by exposing it to all sorts of hasty opinions.

"Well now, be it who it may," said Madame Widen, "the clothes are charming,"—to assure herself more satisfactorily of its fineness, she rubbed it with her finger with the air of a judge,—“yes, quite beautifully fine—at least twelve rix-dollars the yard.”

"And such an enclosure, too," put in the Counsellor, "upon my word, my dear candidate, you have reason to thank your good fortune."

When the party had finished tea, the merchant went to his own room to read the papers—the arrival of which having been delayed until evening by the badness of the roads, had put his patience to the test. The children assembled round the debris of the Christmas Tree, which had now been placed in their maid's room; and after Madame Widen had expended all her inexhaustible powers of conversation upon Mannerstedt, whose feelings were too much dulled by sadness to be able to appreciate her eloquence, she arose, and condescended to make a little visit to the apartment of her housekeeper, dame Bern—true she had, for appearance sake, to give a few orders regarding the morrow—but her real object was to impart to her intimate and confidential aid, the contents of the packet which Mannerstedt

had received, and to endeavour if, by any means, her penetration could discover who this "friend of industry and honest perseverance" really was.

Dame Bern's apartment was simple and neat—she was sitting on the little old-fashioned round sofa—a piece of furniture which, on account of its comfortable qualities, she had rummaged out from among the lumber in the loft. Before the sofa was a small square blue-painted table, and upon this were spread the many-coloured rows of cards for the old lady's favourite patience, or fortune-telling; beside these were placed, in due order, her coffee-cup, snuff-box, her little musk-box, in the shape of a heart—a relic of the year—68—her book of devotion, a psalter, and her pocket-handkerchief.

Her mistress, who, in certain cases, was very condescending, took a chair opposite to her, and, after she had told Dame Bern the whole long and short of the matter, and the latter

had promised to do her best to throw light upon the subject by the following evening, Madame Widen added—

“Do just take one look, Dame Bern, and see what the cards portend for our house. I have, as usual, the diamond, give Rosa the heart, and, for the fun of the thing, let the candidate have the —— club.”

Dame Bern pushed aside her coffee-cup, took a pinch, then sniffed at her musk, and then handed it to her mistress. With a silence, earnest and full of import, the great diamond and all his court were laid out, the prophetess took another pinch, and “hemmed.” Madame Widen said—

“Now then.”

“Well, then look, madame,” Dame Bern commenced. “Is it not just exactly as it has been several times already during this winter? A terrible to do in the house—entertainments and strangers without end? and all appears to originate from a fair-complexioned and, as it

appears, elderly gentleman. It is very clear, too, that there is not a sign of a wedding upon the cards in this case—for the captain is young, and brown to boot, and moreover, it does not look a bit like a wedding, for all that I can see and judge; alas! it rather appears as if some great sorrow and a lull would follow all this bustle. Now look here, my gracious lady can count for herself, there lies the ace of clubs, that is the house, 1, 2, 3, 4, and so on; and now we have the ninth and then the thirteenth card, truly, and as sure as my name is Brita Lisa there is a certain great sorrow toward, and so I tell you, but it does not appear to be either sickness or death; what it may consist in I cannot discover, but it will doubtless prove something important. For our gracious lady herself, the cards are quite splendid: here next to our hands coffee visits and *soirées* without end, and a cheerful agreeable novelty together with a certain dark commodity. Miss Rosa is upon

the cards, light and happy, but good Heavens, how black the captain is looking! What for Heaven's sake can all that be? Aye, aye, I say nothing—nothing at all—but—it is very singular—but nothing regarding him and our young lady will agree—the fair gentleman—it is silly to talk of such a thing—but it does just look—as if he is interfering—but what seems very clear, at any rate, is, that there will be no wedding here, in this house so very soon after all.”

The lady seemed to find no great satisfaction in the novelties which Dame Bern had served up. She sighed once and again, but nevertheless kept her seat as if fettered by the mystical captivation of the noble science.

“For Mr. Mannerstedt,” resumed Dame Bern, “there is upon the cards some great yet still distant good fortune. Look here!” and she again began to count—“after sorrow come sunshiny days—truly now, the dear boy's future lies here, bright and peaceful be-

before me, but he must wander over many a long and weary path, beset with thorns and thistles, ere he shall attain the end. And now I'll pack and shuffle the cards again, and see if they will give us anything better next time."

Somewhat consoled by this, Madame Widen disposed herself rather more comfortably, and her eyes followed every new disposition of the cards with profound interest.

In the meantime, Frank and Rosa had been left alone in the front apartment. Each sat some moments silent, without looking up, at last he said—

"May I venture upon the liberty of asking if Miss Widen is acquainted with the hand which wrote these lines," and he held the paper towards her.

"Yes! well, I know them," answered Rosa, "and to you only will I entrust the name of the noble writer—it is the hand of Professor Ling. When I was in his study a

few days ago I saw his hand-writing, and observed it so exactly that I cannot mistake it."

"Oh, is it possible?" cried Frank, with joyful emotion, "that the old sage has been pleased to bestow some attention upon me. I have often thought since, that on the evening of your betrothal day, Miss Widen, his eye regarded me with looks of kindness, but never, never have I ventured to believe that I possessed in him so great a friend and benefactor. Do you believe that he would take it ill if I were to offer him the expression of my heartfelt acknowledgment."

"I hardly know how to advise in this case, his character is quite peculiar, but thoroughly noble; however, it is quite impossible to know rightly how he would take it, but the circumstance of his having written the address himself, leaves room for the presumption that he did not intend to deprive Mr. Mannerstedt of the possibility of discovering the donor's

name, and therefore I think that, perhaps, it might be the best way to go."

"Then I will do so," rejoined Frank, warmly, "let him take it as he will, I shall have done my duty; should he be formal and cold I shall cut my visit short. Oh, I trust I shall find the right tone—please God—at any rate I must make the trial."

And after these words of Mannerstedt's, a silence ensued, much more painfully embarrassing than the first, for then they both knew exactly what they should, and meant to talk about; now, on the contrary, our young embarrassed pair really did not know what to say—that they, both of them, had something upon their hearts was very clear. The thought of the very short period during which they could venture to calculate upon such freedom as that of the present moment awakened in Rosa, however, courage to come to the point; she rose, went to the piano, opened a little drawer and

took out a packet, at the appearance of which, Mannerstedt was sensible of an emotion of quite a different nature from that which he had experienced on receiving the first.

"It is such a perfect trifle," said Rosa, as she offered it to him, "but I worked every bit of it myself."

Hurriedly, and with glowing cheeks and beaming eyes, Mannerstedt took the packet and pressed the portfolio, which we have previously seen in Rosa's hands, to his lips. The contents were now taken out, Mannerstedt regarded the embroidery on one side, and with what blissful feelings did not his heart swell, as his look fell upon the scene. The moment when he restrained the horse, whilst Rosa sprang out of the Droschky.

Frank did not venture at this moment to look the fair giver in the face. He turned the portfolio and, upon the dark ground, there was but the simple word—"Gratitude."

"Oh, Rosa," faltered his lips, and his look

sought her own, "gratitude, gratitude, and to me, who have you alone to thank, to bless for the few light and happy hours which I have here enjoyed, aye, for the very sweetest moments of my existence ; and this existence itself," added he, taking Rosa's hand, "would I gladly give for this moment. Oh, Rosa, that you could wish to afford me a moment of such inexpressible happiness."

"Why, dear Mr. Mannerstedt should I not wish to do so?" replied she, with the most charming smile—gently, however, withdrawing her hand—when so little can make you happy ; you know that I am always your good sympathising friend, and will always be so, though the relations into which I have entered may perhaps be a cause why we should see each other more seldom, but my kindly feeling, my warm sympathy will be ever the same, rely upon it."

"What can I desire more?" said Frank, and spite of the happiness with which his heart

was filled, a sigh escaped his lips. "I have never, never ventured to hope so much. Oh, to possess in Rosa a friend, now alone as I am in the world, while my heart so eagerly longs for, the consciousness that there is one being to be found on earth, who cherishes one thought, one friendly wish, one sympathising feeling for me. Oh, that is much—much, and my soul is filled with the purest gratitude for this happiness."

He ceased speaking—Rosa too was silent, her sensations were too powerful to be expressed in the only language which she felt sensible she could rightly use, and it was lucky, that at this critical moment, a couple of the children came dancing in, to beg for Rosa's arbitration in a little dispute which had arisen between them; shortly after, Madame Widen returned, and it was easy to see in her radiant countenance, that the cards had become propitious, or that Dame Bern, out of commiseration for her mistress's chagrin, had managed to

make it appear so, and had changed sadness into joy. This however is something which it is not permitted us to know, at any rate, the lady was in her usual, most amiable mood, though she had given directions to have supper served as early as possible, in order to bring this tedious day to an end.

When Mannerstedt was gone, and papa, mama, and the little brothers and sisters had betaken themselves to their beds, or at least to their respective sleeping-rooms, Rosa seated herself at the piano, as she did not wish to go to rest before her usual hour; but before her fingers had touched the keys, she caught sight of a folded paper, her heart beat as she opened it; it contained the music and songs which Mannerstedt had promised her, but too shy to give them to her himself, he had before his departure concealed them in a place, where he knew that she, for whom they were destined, would quickly find them. Rosa, with overflowing joy, recognised the little beautiful,

soul-stirring melodies, which Mannerstedt had composed from the rich feelings of his own heart. She immediately tried them, and how inexpressible was the pleasure she derived from it. 'Twas long past midnight ere she shut the piano, put away her music, and took the songs with her, to read the words over once more in her own room.

On the following day, as they were seated at table, and the captain as well as Mannerstedt were present; the former said to Madame Widen—

“My dear aunt, do help me to persuade Rosa to go to the ball this evening, I shall be in despair if she will not grant my wish.”

“Will not Rosa go to the ball then?” asked her mother rather astonished. “What little bit of obstinacy is this?—you are quite well child, and in that case a young girl must find pleasure and amusement on such occasions, unless she wishes to make herself a particular exception to the general rule.”

"I certainly do not wish that," Rosa assured her mother, "but I have been suffering so severely from tooth-ache all day, and the pain would only be doubled if I had to put on such thin clothes as are requisite for a ball; and dancing too, would be quite intolerable to me."

"Tooth-ache!" said her mother, turning up her nose, "had you said head-ache, I should have readily believed you, for you were extemporising and flourishing away upon the piano all night to a pretty extent. I only know I could not sleep for it, and heartily wished that the fit might not take you very often, for in that case we must lock up the piano."

Madame Widen was evidently very angry, as this was one of the few real cases in which Rosa ever had to receive a reproof; she sat there quite silently, with downcast eyes, while a glowing blush suffused her cheeks, even to her very temples.

At the first words which Madame Widen had uttered, about the piano, and extemporising, Mannerstedt and Rosa's eyes had met. In his glowed a fire quite unusual, and never perceptible before, and a violent flush overspread his face, as he saw how Rosa, with every sign of deep and unusual emotion, hurriedly cast down her eyes, instead of, as previously, freely and kindly meeting his own. Nameless feelings, at this instant, struggled in his bosom, and would forcibly have paved the way for a hope, which his reason and timidity alike rejected as visionary; and, in the excited state of feeling in which he at present was, he even wished himself, that such a hope might be but an idle dream; however, it was very lucky that no one observed him—all eyes were directed upon Rosa—whose glowing cheeks were naturally ascribed to mama's unusual severity.

At last, the Counsellor, with patriarchal dignity, raised his voice.

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“ Dear Brigitta Marie, you are too severe—you have forgotten that in your own younger days you had your little caprices too—all girls have, you know—and Rosa’s tooth-ache may go away by the evening ; it is some hours yet to the ball ; do not you think yourself, my child, that papa is right ? tell me, my love ? ”

“ I do not know, dear papa ; but should I get better, I shall gladly shew that I am not self-willed or obstinate.”

“ Good, very good,” said her father ; “ now that is right, she’ll come round. I knew that my little Rosa would be reasonable.”

Everybody now rose and adjourned to the coffee-table in the drawing-room. Ferdinand seated himself beside Rosa, and appeared to have firmly resolved not to rest until she had promised him to go to the ball. The Counsellor and her mother soon withdrew to go and refresh themselves with a good nap ; and Mannerstedt took his leave ; for unless, as had often been the case already, on similar occasions, he

felt inclined to join the children in their play—he must have been “*de trop*” at present; and he, therefore, rather chose to seek the solitude of his own little chamber to think and dream over the multitude of sweet and melancholy feelings which alternately elated and depressed his heart—for they formed a singular conjunction of dangers and new struggles.

Rosa had not to-day ventured to ask Manerstedt to remain; and Captain Ferdinand was delighted, at length, to be left to the enjoyment of a *tête-à-tête* with his bride.

“I am really very sorry,” he began, as soon as Frank had taken his leave, “I most sincerely regret, dear Rosa, having drawn down a reproof upon you, by noticing the matter to your mother—can you forgive me?”

“Most gladly,” she replied; “though I would much rather you should have rested satisfied with my own refusal. I wished to have made a proposal to you, instead of going to the ball, to pay a visit with me, which I ought to have

paid long ago, and in which I fully believe you would have liked to accompany me."

"Whither, my dear Rosa?" asked the captain, somewhat inquisitively.

"To your aunt, Mrs. Borgensköld; "your cousin Hilda is a very charming and accomplished girl; and I long, with all my heart, to make an intimate acquaintance and friend of her, if I am worthy of being the last, and, at any rate, I mean to try."

Captain Ling passed his handkerchief over his face, with great energy, and coughed terrifically, but said, in a perfectly indifferent tone—

"To aunt Borgensköld, my dear? She and the Professor do not live on the best possible understanding—indeed, they are not upon terms at all; I hardly know, therefore, whether this would be quite proper."

"Proper!" repeated Rosa; "I really cannot look upon it in any other light; your cousin and I may surely make acquaintance, even if

your uncles are not upon terms ; and it would be very wrong in us to give the Professor credit for being likely to disapprove such a very innocent proceeding. No, no, he is certainly not so prejudiced and selfish as that ; and, do you know, that I am very anxious indeed to meet that charming girl ; are you not in the habit of visiting at your aunt's house ? I rather think I have heard that you used to be there a great deal formerly !”

“ Yes, formerly,” replied the captain, not without emotion, “ formerly it was the case ; but it is so no longer ; and if you will absolutely go there, dear Rosa, you must excuse me, if I cannot accompany you.”

“ I really do not know whether I ought to accept your negligence in visiting as an excuse,” returned Rosa, with a smile ; “ it is only a little bit of self-will in you, my dear Ferdinand, and that is hardly becoming in you gentlemen.”

“ It is no self-will, my good Rosa,” assured

the captain, who saw himself obliged to be a little open, in order to get quit of the business. "It is no self-will, I give you my honor; but certain relations, which are too tender to touch upon, make it my duty to break off all intercourse in my aunt's house for the present."

Rosa looked at him with astonishment and surprise—a gloomy fire flashed up in his eyes, and the earnest expression of his features shewed very plainly that he was, at this moment, quite free from all levity, and that what he had said was the truth.

"If such is the case, my dear Ferdinand," she said, slowly, "I will no longer urge it upon you; however, I regret that such relations exist between you, with all my heart; and, meanwhile, I see nothing to prevent my seeking to obtain Hilda's friendship; and so pray forgive me, if I hold to my purpose of visiting her, instead of the ball this evening. I have already learned that she will not be there."

“But why,” objected the captain, “why just this evening? Will you not then pay the least regard to my entreaties? I shall have no pleasure whatever unless your presence gives the ball some interest in my eyes; and, as one of the directors, I cannot remain away; tell me then, dear Rosa, why every wish of mine must continually meet repulse, when, towards every one else, you are so kind, and obliging, and amiable?”

“My dear, good Ferdinand,” said Rosa, giving him her hand with an air of kindness, “you shall, for the future, have no grounds for complaint; but, as to this ball, I really must entreat your indulgence; believe me, that I would most gladly meet your wishes, if I could; however, this once, there is a ‘but’ in the case. I will even confess, that I have an especial reason for my reluctance, which I cannot acquaint you with; for,” she added, looking at him significantly, “I can also have my little secret; but, my dear Ferdinand, you

must not be angry with me, promise now—I am really not at all in a fit mood to enjoy a ball this evening.”

The captain kissed her hand, and arose.

“Well then,” said he, “I will hope and trust that, for the future, we shall find our respective thoughts and ideas more in harmony with each other; I have no right to inquire into your secret; but since I cannot persuade you, I must be off, for the Town Hall requires my attention.”

He bowed slightly, and left her.

Rosa looked anxiously after him, and sighed.

“I doubt whether that time will ever come; for I am every day more and more convinced that our characters, views, and feelings are totally different. I will, however, do all in my power to gain his liking, as I am to be his wife; and if I am successful, then I will hope that, with time and caution, our inclinations may be gradually brought to harmonise. If I

am only happy enough to be able to inspire him with confidence in my principles and judgment, and with some dislike to those too often hurtful societies which he now frequents, I shall at least succeed in rendering our domestic life friendly and agreeable—much prudence, much exertion will be required on my part, however, for that feeling is wanting which lightens and sweetens every duty. Oh, Mannerstedt,” her lips murmured, scarce audibly, as she leaned her burning cheek upon her hand, “can I dance while thy soul is so weighed down with sorrow? No, oh no—that would have been too much—it would have exceeded my utmost strength.”

Rosa would not, however, allow her thoughts to linger upon the subject to which they would so gladly have turned; and she strove with all her energy forcibly to tear herself away from this all powerful feeling.

“My visit,” exclaimed she, quickly, springing up—her toilette was made in all haste—

and, shortly afterwards, Rosa entered Mrs. Borgensköld's apartment, which we are already so well acquainted with; everything therein wore an inviting and comfortable aspect; the old lady, friendly, and cheered by the sight of the dear and long wished-for visitor, rose quickly from her chair by the stove, and welcomed Rosa with every mark of hearty pleasure.

Hilda laid down her guitar, and remained at a little distance, until her mother's embracings and compliments were at an end; she then offered her pretty lips to Rosa's sisterly kiss, and bade her heartily and affectionately welcome.

Rosa soon became quite at home in the agreeable little circle—mama went away to get the tea—and Hilda shewed Rosa her works—and detailed all her pleasant hopes, regarding the journey to Lindfors, about which her father had written, that it was so beautiful, and all the neighbours so friendly and kind.

Rosa listened to all with every sign of pleasure, and wished Hilda joy with all her heart at being able to make such a pleasant jaunt ; to be sure, the portion by sea would be a little disagreeable ; but, altogether, it would be most interesting, and there would be no lack of opportunities of making new acquaintances, especially on their arrival at their new place of abode.

The two girls spent a most agreeable evening together, and both most warmly engaged to visit each other frequently. Ferdinand was not even mentioned—they both felt that this topic was contraband.

CHAPTER XI.

NEW-YEAR'S MORNING AT H——.

THE great town bell had just chimed for divine service, when the long black ranks of the gentlemen of the council slowly ascended the broad steps leading to the house of the principal magistrate, Burgomaster B——; at the same time might be seen several groups of well-dressed persons in blue cloaks, elegantly trimmed with red or green, and both gentlemen and cloaks, who belonged to the Honourable Trading Company, wound round the corner of the small palace, which called the Commercial Counsellor Widen master, and never stayed

their course until it had brought them under the prosperous shadow of the tall and radiant person of the great speculator himself.

Somewhat later, the streets were thronged with young court notaries, strolling along in pleasing variety, arm-in-arm with the young sons of Mars, and visiting such houses as might offer any just claim to such a distinction—that is to say, where there was a young and charming wife, or a pretty daughter, to pay their court to, or—good stores of Rhenish and champagne; at other places, they merely left cards. Not until after service did the other individualities, consisting of young men in the meagre garb of adjuncts, or clerks, &c., commence bowing and scraping in the ante-chambers of their superiors and patrons.

In the dining-hall, at Mr. Widen's, stood a long richly covered table, where all who might be so disposed were at liberty upon New-year's morning to satisfy both their eyes and their appetites. It was a grand levée-day, and the

entrée was free even to all the junior servants of the trade, overseers, and so forth. The merchant himself, in a marvellous morning costume of wadded green silk, sat in state in a large mahogany chair, at the end of the table, and remained there from nine in the morning until one in the afternoon, at which period, the poor wearied man was, at last, at liberty to seek consolation for his toils in a refreshing nap upon his own especial cosy sofa.

During this long interval, the mistress of the house was incessantly bustling backwards and forwards from ante-room to dining-hall; in the former was served up wine and confitures, and in the latter was collected all the youth, brilliancy, taste, and beauty, which the town could offer. Here were to be found numerous bands of all those unattainable capital, noble, proud, and manly lieutenants, cornets, rittmeisters, and so forth, created solely and alone for the purpose of delighting and being delighted; as also young

civilians, disciples of Esculapius, chief book-keepers, and others of the same stamp, together with an immense crowd of graces, grouped about at the windows, sitting on tabourets, or in the corners of the hall, and chatting and whispering to each other about that divine masquerade which was to form the evening's amusement.

Rosa stood at the last window, her ears and eyes were in the street, while some other mysterious instinct directed the answers which she occasionally gave the two or three young gentlemen who inflicted upon her their common-place questions—such as why they had not had the pleasure of seeing Miss Widen at the last ball, &c. It could not well have been Captain Ferdinand after whom Rosa was looking, for he had been there a couple of hours before, and had assured her, with a thousand tender expressions, that he was positively so engaged for the entire morning—

and then, after all the noise and racket should be so tired out—that she must not expect him before the afternoon.

But Mannerstedt had not yet made his appearance, nor had he been there since the second festival day. Rosa's heart had, during this week, suffered the pangs of martyrdom; she had felt obliged to follow her mother from one amusement to another—had had to sing, play, and dance, in private societies and balls, while she was tortured all the while with the most intolerable anxiety—for Mannerstedt had again fallen sick, not dangerously, it is true, but sufficiently so to prevent his leaving his chamber for several days. The violent and contending emotions of which he had been the prey, in conjunction with his own imprudence in having left his bed, and ventured out into the cold air, so soon after violent fever, altogether had brought upon him a fresh indisposition, which was perhaps worse than the

first, though he was able to be up, and pace his lonely apartment with slow and weary steps.

All these circumstances, as far as they related to his outward and visible life, Rosa was acquainted with, for Madame Widen had sent daily to enquire after her *protégé*. She had settled it in her own head that Caroline's singing lessons should commence as soon as the candidate could shake off that plaguy sorrow, and a more plaguy cold which he had moreover brought upon himself; and, indeed, as to this latter evil, Larson, who had been over with him in the morning, had brought back the intelligence that Frank was now all well again, and had talked of going out to-day. It was, therefore, hardly to be wondered at if Rosa's eyes were continually fixed upon the street; she was, however, often obliged to turn and address her guests, and therefore could not see all that passed there. At the very moment when the gay buzz of conversation had reached

its height, and amid the noise and loud talking and laughing a knock at the door could scarcely be heard ; Rosa's attentively listening ear, however, detected one ; almost at the same moment the door was opened, and Mannerstedt entered. He was dressed in his new black suit, which was of fashionable cut, and became him remarkably well ; hat in hand, he gracefully and ceremoniously made his bow to the company, and then approached Rosa, (her mother was just at that instant away upon her wanderings) and in a few simple but well-selected expressions, wished her as much happiness in the coming year as—as—could ever be collected into the lot of one poor mortal.

The assembled guests were extremely astonished, as well at the candidate's new vestments as at his behaviour and bearing, which had a certain striking resemblance to that which it had been during the famous waltz on the betrothal evening.

Whispers passed.

“Eh, ah—what does that mean—eh?”

The graces curled their sweet lips in the prettiest possible manner, and the gentlemen had forgotten that they had still at least ten or a dozen visits to make. However, Mannerstedt did not remain seated above three minutes, he then arose, and with another bow left the room; his respects had to be paid to the Counsellor, and he had several other visits of duty to attend to. During the few minutes that he had been sitting there, Frank had placed his hat and gloves upon a table beside him, and had, in the distraction of his thoughts, forgotten the latter, when he made his bow, to pay his visit in the dining hall; here he felt obliged at a gracious invitation from the great man, to take his place at the table for a short time; whilst this passed, the company in the drawing-room had gradually departed, and Rosa was left alone. She was just upon the point of putting her hat on to go out herself, when Mannerstedt re-entered to fetch his forgotten gloves. In

the greatest possible hurry, hat, veil, and handkerchief were thrown down again upon the table.

"Is Miss Widen thinking of going to church?" asked Frank, as he approached the table where Rosa had quite innocently buried his gloves under all her own things.

"Yes, I believe—yes, very probably," answered Rosa, extremely embarrassed at finding herself, for the first time since the little scene at table, alone with him whom she felt every day becoming more dangerous to her peace.

"Pray excuse me if I am detaining you," stammered Frank, as confused as herself, "I merely wished to take my gloves.

And now they both began to search most diligently; at last Rosa found the lost property, and offered it to the owner with a shy and timid—

"I really beg your pardon."

Mannerstedt could not help taking the hand

as well as what it held, and ventured, for the first time, to allow his lips to burn upon its snow, but rapidly controlling the storm of feeling with the power of his will, he resumed his calmness, released her hand, and in a low, but firm voice, said—

“Captain Ling visited me in that first and most painful moment of my sorrow, and rather will I die than be ungrateful.” He stopped and appeared to be struggling with himself, but quickly continued—“My warmest prayers shall be constantly offered up for his and Rosa’s happiness. This happiness of both must ever be bound up in one, for the inviolability of such a union is sacred, sacred in itself—sacred against every unpermitted wish which under the serpent’s form may essay to creep into its paradise of peace and innocence, and poison with its mere breath the fresh and happy life within. No! such wishes may not penetrate or find admittance there. They sleep silent and at rest, for the Rose is ever sacred to them,

and only from afar and in the rich world of memory may they venture to rejoice in its glory."

Mannerstedt's glance sought Rosa's eyes; they were cast down, but he saw a tear pearly in the long silken lashes; his life would have been cheap for the privilege of kissing it away, but then he would have scorned himself, and so perhaps would she; he thought upon his mother's last bequest—her letter—and fled.

An hour later two young girls, well furred and veiled, were tripping arm-in-arm down the Hafen Strasse; they stopped at the house of Professor Ling, and entered.

"Come, come, dear Hilda," said Rosa Widen, drawing Miss Borgensköld with her through the little hall. "I must pay uncle Ling a visit, and you must come with me. I feel assured, indeed I will guarantee that you will be welcome."

"Be it upon your conscience then," rejoined

Hilda, with a faint smile, "if he should be uncivil it is quite impossible for me to do any thing you do not wish, even if I am to suffer for it myself; but I do assure you, my good Rosa, that I should be in a shocking way if the Professor should give me one of those sharp killing glances, with that peculiar expression which he has when he chooses."

"No, no," said Rosa, tranquillizing her, "he cannot possibly do it, only come now and rely upon me."

The two girls entered the study—it was empty; but Rosa boldly opened the door leading to the little yellow drawing-room; she held Hilda, who was behind her, by the hand, put her head in and asking—

"Have we leave uncle?" Stood awaiting his reply in the entrance; but a thousand treacherous wicked clouds of crimson suffused her cheeks and forehead as her eyes discovered, besides the Professor, the figure of another person on the sofa, opposite

the door—and that other—how could she ever have supposed she should meet him here? Nevertheless it was—Mannerstedt himself, who had come to pay a visit to the Professor, to tender him his warm and grateful thanks for the bounteous aid which he had afforded him.

“Now then child, what is it? Come in, come in,” cried the Professor, and one of his sharp quick glances turned first upon Rosa’s blushing cheeks and then upon the young candidate. But Mannerstedt had arisen, and with a rapid turn, stood all of a sudden absorbed in admiration, before a beautiful vase. Professor Ling, however, understood something about similar fits of admiration, and if the veritable state of affairs was not entirely clear to his comprehension, a suspicion was at any rate confirmed, of which the first spark had been kindled in his mind on the evening of the betrothal.

At that time his eyes had been fixed with

sympathy upon Mannerstedt, whom he had never seen before, and of whose industry, as well as poverty, he had heard much ; and during this slight survey he had plainly noticed the fire which flashed up in the youth's eye whenever he chanced to catch a passing glance of Rosa's white dress, as she flitted by. The old man's silent conclusions, as usual, found vent in a long drawn hum—whereupon—with the aid of his stick, he got up to welcome the girls.

"Welcome, my child," he kissed Rosa's forehead ; "and you too, Hilda—h-m—h-m !"

"My good, kind uncle," said Rosa, caressingly, and stroking the Professor's wrinkled cheeks, "I have ventured to assure Hilda that she would be welcome here ; and I am ready to die with apprehension lest she should not be so."

"You little simpleton," said the Professor, "I cannot really take the burden upon my

conscience of letting you die for any such dreadful cause. Come here, Hilda, dear—there now, is it right now? Well, well, you are both of ye welcome; and so now sit down. But what the fiend, Mr. Mannerstedt, what makes ye stand there gaping at that vase, or the flowers in it, while we have such beautiful living blossoms here for you to glad your eyes with; come, turn round, sir, and behave yourself, and shew your face to the ladies, and let them see that you have not altogether forgotten all politeness and good ton—and all that, that Ferdinand is everlastingly chattering about.”

The name of Ferdinand in conjunction with all the rest, did not exactly answer the purpose of bringing the young people's confused thoughts into order again; gradually, however, they all recovered themselves, and Mannerstedt managed to collect himself sufficiently to engage them in a tolerably connected and

agreeable train of conversation, to which the Professor, to-day in an especially pleasant humour, largely contributed.

"We ought to have some wine and biscuits, and that sort of thing," said the Professor, somewhat impatient at not seeing Madame Brun make her appearance.

His three guests certainly wanted nothing of the kind; but their host's will was law; and Hilda, who, from her earlier days, was as good as at home here, got up quickly, and with an—"Allow me, uncle," was out of the room in a second, and soon returned with the desired refreshment upon a waiter.

"Where the devil is Madame Brun hiding herself?" asked the Professor, feeling a little embarrassed at seeing Hilda so completely at home again.

"She is busy in the kitchen, my dear uncle. She has only just returned from church," replied Hilda, beginning quietly and composedly

to hand round the plates, and play the hostess.

They were just beginning to enjoy the Professor's excellent old Muscat, when the door was suddenly thrown open with a rush, and Captain Ferdinand came rattling in, spurred, sabred and all.

"Now then, what in Heaven's name is the matter now, uncle?" exclaimed he, in astonishment, as he beheld the bottles, glasses, cakes, and the guests, who were sitting around the Professor's large table; for here the usual refreshment was merely a glass of water, or perhaps small beer.

But at the sight of Hilda, he turned pale, and his gaiety suddenly gave place to an artificial and constrained tone, which he felt at once was quite out of place; but he was quite incapable of resuming his usual sprightliness.

This little incident put all parties out of

tune. Hilda's proud feelings could not, however, be repressed by the power of the moment. With the most indifferent tone, though not unkindly, she asked—

“Well, Ferdinand, in how many different masks are you going to appear this evening?”

“In no mask except my own countenance,” replied Ferdinand, affronted and hurt.

He fancied Hilda meant to say something sarcastic and stinging, and had therefore brought up the subject of the masquerade. His misapprehension of, and almost uncourteous answer, to her question, made her blood course quickly through Hilda's veins, and she hastily retorted—

“I should fancy that would afford you quite sufficient variety.”

The captain was in a perfect glow of rage, grief, and wine; and feeling that all this together was setting his head in a whirl, he had discretion enough to get up, make a silent bow, and leave the room.

Rosa, as well as the Professor and Mannerstedt, had attentively regarded this little interlude; and, after Ferdinand's withdrawal, the agreeable character of their party was still more disturbed than at his entrance; and the two girls therefore shortly after took their leave; and Frank Mannerstedt was left alone again with his host.

Both were, for some time, silent; at length, the Professor said—

“Hem, hem, this is a foolish world—do men ever really know what they want? upon my soul, I believe they do not.”

“It is possible,” urged Frank, modestly, “that they may not be always ignorant of what they wish; but should these wishes stand in opposition to the iron-hand of necessity, to yield becomes a compulsory virtue.”

“Ha, do you think so, my dear candidate?” said the old man, with a good-natured smile. “Aye, aye, such might be the case; but, meanwhile, men involve and entangle them-

selves by their own thoughtless conduct in a whole crowd of necessities and duties, without which they could have been easy enough, and which of themselves again entail incalculable results."

Mannerstedt, who was totally ignorant of the domestic relations of the family, was not aware to what the Professor alluded, and therefore thought it best to be silent; the old gentleman bent his quick, sharp glance firmly upon Frank, and continued—

"My nephew and his bride, for instance."

He paused.

"How so?" asked Mannerstedt, in a tolerably composed tone, though his voice slightly trembled.

"Why, in my opinion," continued the Professor, "they have just entered into a mutual relation of the sort, and have taken duties upon themselves, which I am apprehensive they may respectively find not a little difficult of performance—for they are no more suited to each other than the girl would be to me."

“ I have not the honour of knowing much of the captain,” replied Mannerstedt, rather distressed at his host’s melancholy forebodings, “ and therefore I cannot pretend to judge as regards him ; but I have known Miss Widen long and well, and I know not how the man must be constituted whom her amiable nature and truly feminine good qualities would not make happy.”

“ Well then, he must just be exactly endowed with the qualities,” said the Professor, “ which fall to the share of my beloved nephew. I know the business, and cannot avoid regretting the blindness of these two young people. Indeed I go so far as to wish, from my heart, that the whole affair was broken off ; but what says Mr. Mannerstedt to this ? when one sees plain enough that the business is going to the deuce—or, to use a more elegant term, when one finds that one has taken a step which one could wish untaken, in one word, when two people feel that they are utterly unsuited to each

other, is it not the best way to bid each other good-bye again while it is time ?”

The Professor's tone, during the latter part of his oration, had involuntarily got a tinge of the bitterness which so often lay therein, and it was hardly possible to determine whether what he said was in earnest or in jest, or was only an attempt to get at Mannerstedt's view of the matter. However, whatsoever his purpose might have been, it merely awakened in Frank an excessively disagreeable feeling, which proceeded from the principles engrafted in his early years, and which never wavered for a single instant, though the thought of the advantage, or perhaps the happiness, of an entire existence, which might possibly be the result of such a case as had been suggested, was so near his heart ; and with stedfast earnestness, he replied—

“I, for my part, consider a betrothal, in regard to its duration, as sacred as marriage itself. Ought the promise mutually given in the

presence of the Omniscient alone to be less sacred than that which is given before man?—both vows may be broken, or set aside; but whether rightly or no, I leave undetermined—at least I cannot venture to pronounce a judgment.”

There was a certain air of cordial good-will in the looks with which the Professor regarded Mannerstedt as he thus spoke, and the smile that curled his lips was full of kindness, as, after a short pause, he replied—

“That does not sound altogether so indiscreet, my dear candidate—they are very pretty principles, and such as with their natural results I should be delighted to see generally practised; but they are, by no means, applicable to every individual relation of the kind. And to demonstrate this, I will lay the contents of a chapter before Mr. Mannerstedt, which will, I think, make him adopt another view of the case. Marriages are, without counting the shades, which are as various both



in light and form, as the gradations between black and white, principally of three kinds or classes—the first position is that occupied by the happy ones—they proceed from the mutual accord of two good characters; in them the word, which is so significant in married life, ‘forgiveness,’ is almost a dead letter, because there is nothing necessary either to be forgotten or forgiven—perhaps here and there there may be occasion for a little indulgence or overlooking; but this mutual indulgence is forgotten as soon as it has occurred—it was a transaction of the heart, not of the understanding or memory; of such marriages, however, there are but few; the best part are what may be termed medium—in them there is no question of either esteem or contempt. Custom, the physical necessity of food, clothing, and so forth, form the tenure of a tie which has often been entered upon from indifference, or, perhaps, even from still worse motives—this tie, if a better prospect of better circumstances

should present itself, might be as easily dissolved as the acquaintance of two way-farers, who meet each other for the first time at an inn, and shake hands at parting, to resume each his respective journey. After these in order come unhappy marriages. In these, continual forgiveness is necessary, and of a kind which is never forgotten, for the healing wound is always rent again before it has had time to close. These marriages, however, are not, at once, what they finally become—they shew how difficult a task it is to forget; to do so would demand a total annihilation of an entire being, or, at least, an altered and improved relation must gradually obliterate the thoughts of the past; if such, however, never comes to pass, or, at least, not permanently, then the venomous serpents of memory coil themselves faster and faster about our heart-strings, and the genie of peace and domestic happiness fly from us, with the sad certainty that they never will return. We may rest tolerably well assured that Ferdinand's and

Rosa's marriage, if it ever comes to pass, will never belong to the first of these classes, as their characters are in the highest degree different—it will not, I verily believe, sink so low as the second ; but I fear that we must reckon it as one of the third ; and, in this case, I ask once more, is it reasonable—is it prudent to sacrifice oneself, and one's whole prospective happiness just to be the blind slave of an over-hasty promise ?”

Mannerstedt was both deeply affected and agitated ; the Professor's detailed and peculiar handling of the subject had rather unsettled his own convictions of the right.

“I cannot—dare not venture to speak my thoughts in this case,” he slowly said. “I cannot rely upon my own judgment—I am still young, and have not collected much experience to aid me, and I may, therefore, have deceived myself ; but this I do certainly know—that my ears may never have the pain of hearing, should the engagement be broken off, that its dissolution has originated from Rosa—I do

most heartily and fervently wish—for to meet with any action which had a shade of levity in so beautiful a character, would most deeply afflict me.”

With a look full of friendly approbation, the Professor gave Mannerstedt his hand.

“I believe myself,” said he, “that it will never originate with her; however, let us talk of something else, when do you hope to be able to graduate?”

“Not for a year. I have an examination before me, ere I can attain the object which I have long been striving for, and which has only been delayed by my distressed circumstances; but I am now preparing myself for it with all the energy I possess.”

“Good, and what prospects has Mr. Mannerstedt for his future settlement?”

“According to what one of my old friends, Counsellor Sifver, wrote me this day, I have the decided promise, as soon as I have finished my course, of the vicariat with the rector of the school of my native town, and when the

rector, who is already in years, receives the pastorship, which cannot be long ere it occurs, I have the hope of succeeding him in his present place."

"That all sounds very well," said the Professor, "and as I have always had a pleasure in young men who work their own way by economy and industry, it will afford me great satisfaction, if I can in any way assist Mr. Mannerstedt in leaving this; and the sooner, the better."

Mute with grateful emotion, Mannerstedt bowed deeply.

"I have no more eager wish; I will, and must leave this." Confused at the idea of the interpretation which the Professor's penetration would possibly put upon this "must," he stood up to take leave, but his hospitable host holding him back, replied—

"I ordered Madame Brun this morning to have dinner for two, in case I might be fortunate enough to catch some guest to partake with me."

Mannerstedt cordially thanked him, and reseated himself, and the conversation took a more general turn.

When the Candidate had left him in the evening, the Professor muttered to himself, "a confounded brave lad, a regular good one; it would be a sin not to help him. H-m, h-m. I can't understand the little bride, why the d—l could not she have waited, she might have relied upon it, that the honest lad would not have run away from her; however, I suppose she fancied that her father and mother would never have consented; young girls never can help thinking over the possibilities and turns things may take; the day might come however, when the Commercial Counsellor would thankfully accept a rector for a son-in-law. H-m, H-m, for I see that it is all up with Ferdinand—h-m—h-m.

END OF VOL. I.

